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Assessing the Marine Corps Mentorship Program: Planned vs. Actual Use and Perceived Effectiveness

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March 2013

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ASSESSING THE MARINE CORPS MENTORSHIP PROGRAM: PLANNED VS. ACTUAL USE AND PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

MCMP	Marine Corps Mentoring Program
NPS	Naval Postgraduate School
FITREP	Fitness Report
MOS	Military Occupational Specialty
PFC	Private First Class
LCPL	Lance Corporal
CPL	Corporal
SGT	Sergeant
SSGT	Staff Sergeant
GYSGT	Gunnery Sergeant
CAPT	Captain
LT	Lieutenant
MCO	Marine Corps Order
NAVMC	Navy Marine Corps
MCIWS	Marine Corps Water Survival Training Program
OCS	Officer Candidate School
RS	Reporting Senior
IG	Inspector General

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I.   INTRODUCTION

In 2006, The Marine Corps drafted its first official guidance implementing an effective mentoring program. The guidance was intended to support the implementation of a successful mentoring program. This research assesses the extent to which that intent has been achieved. The aim of the program, as stated in the guidance, was to provide Marines with the opportunity to reach their full potential and to help shape future leaders, while also strengthening the sense of camaraderie in the Marine Corps. The Marine Corps Mentoring Program (MCMP) was inspired in part by cultural studies at the Center for Naval Analysis, Behavioral Science Technology. These studies were conducted following in increase of awareness and concern regarding a flaw in the Marine leadership. Mentoring has become a crucial concern in the Marine Corps, as in many civilian organizations, as it is thought to ensure development, efficiency, and success. Mentoring is, after all, one of the most certain and effective ways through which leaders can pass on their skills and knowledge to the next generation of professionals (Ragins & Kram, 2007)

> The MCMP is based on the following ideals and basic principles: "One must put himself in the place of those whom he would lead; he must have a full understanding of their thoughts, their attitude, their emotions, their aspirations, and their ideals; and he must embody in his/her own character the virtues which he would instill into the hearts of his/her followers." (Lejeune, 1921)

The focal question of this study is to what extent does the MCMP manage to realize the goal of passing skills and knowledge to new recruits and upcoming professionals. In other words, how effective is the MCMP as a mentoring program? Given that the program was enacted to ensure that the Marines reach their full potential, the question is indeed of primary importance to ensure the continuing progress of the Marine Corps. The examination of this question is the purpose of this paper.

A. PURPOSE/RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of the study is to examine the effectiveness of the MCMP and make recommendations for improvements. The MCMP's guidance is that every Marine will have access to and tools from a mentor, from the lowest to the most senior of officers and enlisted personnel. In the pursuit of making Marines more productive, the program was enacted to help Marines grasp and understand a Marines' purpose and the organization as presented both personally and professionally by upcoming leaders, to grow unit solidity, strengthen cohesion, foster relationships of unpretentious concern, and better prepare Marines to handle the amplified challenges of today's operational climate. This in turn is meant to strengthen relationships through accountability and responsibility and the adherence of Marine Corps core values, 24/7. This research explores and documents the initial motivation and implementation plan of the program and assesses the extent to which the actual implementation is consistent with the original plan. It examines how extensively the program is used and also examines mentors' and protégés' assessments of the program. The research identifies advantages and disadvantages of the program, compared with the best practices from the academic literature. This provides insight on the efficacy of the policy-driven program. Anonymous responses to an electronic survey were collected from Marines officers from the Naval Postgraduate School, as well as various ranks of Marines stationed in the fleet.

The main objective of this research is to assess the extent to which the MCMP is perceived to meet its stated goals. This research

a.   Documents the objectives of the MCMP and assesses the planned against the actual implementation.

b.   Examines the extent to which the program is used in terms of frequency and type of mentoring.

c.   Assesses Marines' perceptions of the effectiveness of the directed MCMP.

B.   BACKGROUND/HISTORY

The MCMP was implemented to allow Marines to share leadership lessons. The guidance explains how Marines are mentored by Marines who are senior to them. For example, the squad leader is mentored by the platoon sergeant. The Marine Corps Order provides an explanation of mentoring goals for the unit, team, and individuals. The MCMP guidance explains also how the Marine should meet his or her mission. Mentoring is to occur at least once a month. Also, certain situations and events were defined by the MCMP guidance as sufficient causes for additional mentoring. These include preparing for one's deployment or a return from deployment, among others.

Mentoring occurs when a person enhances someone else's professional life by fostering self-insight, identifying needed knowledge, or expanding the other person's perspectives (Ranson, 2008). When mentoring occurs, the mentee learns something that otherwise would be acquired less thoroughly, more slowly, or not at all (Ranson, 2008). Automation assists with the implementation of the MCMP and its documentation necessities. A website devoted to the MCMP allows Marines to access specific orders and procedures which are necessary for conducting a mentor and mentee relationship. Mentoring program guidebooks can be procured and distributed automatically to guide and assist a mentor in his or her professional duties of developing a mentee. An automated combat readiness percentage can be generated to let Marines know how they are progressing towards unit goals and to reinforce the fact that each Marine plays a part in his or her unit's success.

Leadership mentoring log worksheets can be maintained by both the mentor and mentee even if the Marines are not located within close proximity of each other. These logs document progress, mission, goals, actions taken over a course of time, and how an individual Marine is supporting the unit's overall mission. Honor, courage and commitment assessments, common combat skills checklists, and off-duty commitment

assessments are other automated tools that can be used to track a Marine's progress. The importance of automation was not recognized in previous Marine mentoring programs, but is a key aspect of the current MCMP.

The notion of mentorship is imbued with a variety of meanings. Mentoring is a developmental relationship in which a more knowledgeable person serves as a guide, role model, educator, and sponsor of a less experienced person, the protégé (Kram, 1983). Mentors are vital to the career growth of subordinates in today's organizations. At a deeper level, mentors are frequently considered to be individuals with unconventional experience and knowledge that are dedicated to providing support and help to speed or direct the career advancement of junior organizational members (Allen, 2002; Kram, 1985). Correspondingly, Allen (2003) suggests that a mentor can be perceived as somebody who takes a particular interest in, guides, sponsors, or otherwise has a constructive and noteworthy impact on the professional career development of a protégé or junior person. These definitions have a resounding similarity.

Although the characterization of mentorship varies, there are consistent attributes of these relationships. In the last decade, mentoring has become a hot topic within the military. In 2003, in *Guidance for the Navy,* the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Vernon Clark noted, "Mentoring should be a paramount focus of the Navy." Admiral Clark directed that a mentor be assigned for every service member on active duty. Implementation by Marine Corps Commandant General M. W. Hagee came a few years later with the birth of the MCMP. The MCMP is a Marine Corps–wide professional development tool designed to help every Marine regardless of rank meet his or her full potential, both professionally and personally. The idea behind this mandatory mentoring program is that the mentor will become invested in his or her Marine's career progression and development and will provide counsel, challenge, and most importantly support.

So, why is there such an emphasis on mandatory mentoring within the Marine Corps? The civilian world has shown that efficient mentoring relations can augment recruitment and retention efforts, help support new and existing personnel with

professional and personal development, facilitate the resolution of an assortment issues, improve employee approval and promotion, support calculated sequence planning, and improve communication and the conveyance of information. The goal of the MCMP was and still is to provide the positive aspects of mentoring as seen in the civilian workspace to the military environment.

The goal of the MCMP is to improve the Marine through a holistic approach that targets the good of the entire Corps by developing today's and tomorrow's leaders. The goal of the MCMP as stated "is to closely connect leaders and their Marines and to develop the leadership qualities of junior Marines and leaders enabling them to assume progressively greater responsibilities for themselves, each other and to the Marine Corps" (Hagee, 2006, p. 1). The program is meant to give Marine leaders tools to better their ability to interact with their reports at all levels in order to improve performance in personal and professional settings. Mentors are to genuinely show support of Marines in their personal and professional lives, which in turn makes an effective Marine.

C.   ORGANIZATION OF STUDY

The following chapters of this study assess how extensively the MCMP is used and examine mentors and protégés' assessments of the program. This analysis is used to make recommendations for improvements.

In Chapter II, I present a literature review of the concept of mentoring from the academic perspective. Chapter III explains the methods used for this study. Chapter IV details this study's analysis and findings. Chapter V offers a discussion by pointing out the barriers discovered from this research and possible recommendations to fix those barriers. Chapter VI details final thoughts, limitations of the research, recommendations for further research and the overall benefits of the study.

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II.   LITERATURE REVIEW

A.   WHAT IS MENTORING?

1.   Definition

The Marine Corps makes mentorship an order for all officers and enlisted personal in leadership positions, in order to ensure that everyone is aware of the overall importance and relevance the Marine Corps places on mentoring. This requirement has formalized. Scholars have conducted considerable research on mentoring, reviewed in this section.

Mentoring can be defined in many ways. The term *mentor* goes back in history to Greek mythology. To understand the true concept of mentorship, we must examine various meanings from academic circles. Mentoring has been defined as a relationship whereby a more senior, experienced individual is committed to providing developmental assistance and guidance to a less experienced protégé´ (Kram, 1985). Mentoring can be described as a relationship between an older, wiser, more experienced person with advanced experience and knowledge or know-how, who is devoted to providing support to, and increasing career development of, a junior protégé (Allen, 2002; Kram, 1985). Allen (2003) suggested, "a mentor can be seen as someone who takes a personal interest in, guides, sponsors, or otherwise has a positive and significant influence on the professional career development of a junior person or protégé." Levinson (1978) conceptualized mentoring as a pivotal experience in transition to adulthood, were one person (the mentor) acts as a teacher to help another person (the protégée) develop a sense of personal efficacy and professional identity" (Eby, 2007, p. 505).

2.   Misconceptions

To fully understand the concept of mentoring, it is important to recognize common misconceptions regarding mentoring relationships. Kram (1985) pointed out five misconceptions. The first misconception is that the protégé is the only one benefiting

from being mentored. Kram argues that not only is the protégé benefiting, but also the organization as a whole benefits. The second misconception is that the mentoring relationship will be a positive one for both the mentor and protégé." Several scholars point out that most of the existing research on problems in mentoring relationships has examined the protégé perspective and found that some protégés report problems such as personality mismatches, mentor neglect, mentor sabotage, and mentors lacking technical expertise, among other things (Ragins & Kram, 2007). The third misconception is that work settings and environments are similar in every organization. Mentor relationships differ in many ways, including range of functions and durations of the relationship depending on the work situation and MOS. The fourth misconception is that mentoring is accessible to everyone who desires a mentor (Wright, 1987; Roche, 1979). Although more organizations are focusing on mentorship, a large number still do little to formally encourage mentoring in the workplace (Wright, 1987; Roche, 1979). Last, but not least, there is a misconception that in order to succeed, there must be a mentor to guide you in order to advance and grow in your career. There are successful personnel that have no mentoring relationships (Wright, 1987; Roche, 1979).

B.   MENTORING OUTCOMES

In spite of the belief that the only one benefiting from mentoring is the protégé, it is safe to say that the mentor and the organization as a whole all benefit. Kram (1985) suggests that protégé and mentor benefits falls into four different categories. The benefits can be categorized into career advancement, networking, professional development, and personal identity. Although there are positive benefits, there are also negative aspects of mentoring.

1.   Protégé Benefits

Kram (1985) identifies the outcomes for protégés who have mentors. Protégés report more job approval, career dedication, job fulfillment, and better potential for advancement than those without mentors. This leads many intellectuals to believe that

mentoring relationships offer significant advantages to career progression from a protégé standpoint. Kram (1985) describes that many mentors who serve as role models support and mold the protégés' personal individuality in the workplace.

Wright and Wright (1987) discuss the ways a protégé can benefit from having a mentor. Most importantly, a mentor can augment the career development of subordinate staff. Senior mentors can teach the technical aspects of work, help the protégé define their career aspirations, and provide knowledge to support protégés in meeting or exceeding their potential and professional goals. Networking was the second area of benefit to protégés. By revealing junior personnel to more senior personnel and their professional hierarchical layers, mentors amplify the visibility of their protégés within the organization. Exposing protégés to senior personnel allows protégés to demonstrate competence and also assists the mentor in monitoring their junior personnel.

Mentors help protégés improve professional growth, institute career goals, and comprehend and pilot their professional environments. Wright and Wright (1987) showed that mentors also help give vital insight into the behaviors and norms that are expected within the organization if one is to further succeed. Mentors can enhance a protégé's self–image and self–esteem by providing acceptance within the organization. A mentor's principles, behaviors, and approach towards teaching could help protégés understand the effective way of doing their job. "Mentors who serve as role models for their protégés help to mold their personal identities" (Kram 1985). Roche (1979) found that those having mentors earned higher wages, were better educated, and had greater pleasure in their career, in general (Roche, 1979). In summary, studies continue to demonstrate the benefits of having a mentor both personally and professionally.

2.   Mentor Benefits

There are also numerous benefits that can derive from being a mentor. The personal pleasure mentors receive from monitoring and participating in the achievements of their protégés is among the top benefits (Allen, 1997; Eby & Lockwood, 2004; Kram, 1985). A mentor\relationship can provide rewarding experiences and strengthen mentors'

sense of ability and accomplishments (Kram & Hall, 1989). Another benefit for mentors is that protégés can improve the job performance of their mentors by providing mentors with new perspectives and knowledge (Eby & Lockwood, 2004; Kram & Hall, 1989; Mullen & Noe, 1999). For example, mentors may benefit from their protégés by using new emerging technologies not known by the mentor. Protégés can also become allies and provide a normal loyal base of support especially as protégés move up into the organization (Kram, 1985; Ragins & Scandura, 1999). Mentors can gain recognition from superiors and peers by helping mentees progress within the organization (Kram, 1985; Ragins & Scandura, 1997). Finally, possibly the most significant advantage for mentors of mentoring is be the sense of significance, pride, and generatively that a relationship and success of a protégé imparts.

3.   Organization Benefits

It is a given that protégés and mentors benefit from mentoring relationships, but it is important to point out how the organizations can gain from mentoring as a whole. Mentoring can increase impetus, job fulfillment, and production, which all can influence organizational climate, retention rate, and efficiency.

Wilson and Elman (1990) discussed the organizational benefits of mentoring by focusing on relating mentoring to the "long-term health of the organization as a social system." One beneficial impact is that mentoring helps offer an organized system for strengthening and stabilizing organizational culture. "Modern day corporations must provide the guidance required by future generations of leaders so they are prepared to take command" (Wilson & Elman, 1990, p. 5). The organization benefits not only by grooming new leaders, but also through the formation, development and diffusion of a strong culture. A strong culture helps to ensure that core organizational lessons are remembers and transmitted. A widespread, informal mentor-based information network can minimize internal disagreements and displeasure and expose otherwise hidden opportunities.

4.   Negative Outcomes

Mentoring has many positive outcomes for protégés, mentors, and organizations. However, there are also negative outcomes. Negatives outcomes can and do result from mentoring situations. Scholars typically approach the negative aspects of mentoring from two perspectives: one is mentor's outlook on the relationship and the other is the protégé's perception. Negative perceptions of either can ultimately affect the mentoring relationship and the organization.

Research on interpersonal relationships discuss a variety of negative behaviors that both members may engage in, which can lead to relational problems, such as fights and conflicts, jealousy, possessiveness, sabotage, selfishness, and deception, among others (Duck, 1982; Marshall, 1994). The mentoring literature points out negative experiences mentors have had with their protégés. They include acts of disloyalty, protégé opportunism, having a protégé who is a bad reflection on oneself, and dysfunctional relationship dynamics (Halatin & Knotts, 1982; Ragins & Scandura, 1997, 1999). Scandura's (1998) study of dysfunctional relationships also presents various concerns from theoretical conversations and how a continuing inequity of authority within mentor relations can result in a breakdown in mentorship. If a protégé becomes too reliant on or passive to his or her mentor, he or she becomes an encumbrance and this can create a trying experience. Kram's (1985) theory suggests that even with good mentorship, there is always a prospect of potentially harmful and unfavorable results in a mentoring relationship from each side. There is always a possibility that the mentor will give poor, vague, or just plain wrong advice or guidance to their protégé thus hurting both the relationship and organization. Negative experiences resulting from the mentor relationship can be hazardous both professionally and personally to both mentor and protégé.

C. MENTOR FUNCTIONS (CAREER DEVELOPMENT VS. PSYCHOSOCIAL FUNCTIONS)

Kram (1985) developed a categorization of universal components of mentoring, including the categories career development and psychosocial functions. Mentors provide protégés with career development functions and psychosocial support. Kram defined career development functions as functions of the relationship that augment career advancement. Career functions include sponsorship, providing exposure and visibility, coaching, protection, and providing challenging assignments (Kram, 1985). Psychosocial functions include providing acceptance and confirmation, counseling, friendship and role modeling to protégés. These psychosocial functions serve to increase the self–worth of protégés by affirming their identity (Kram, 1985).

Career functions serve to increase visibility and learning for protégés. "Career functions involve a range of behaviors that help protégés 'learn the ropes' and prepare them for hierarchical advancement within their organizations" (Ragins & Kram, 2007, p.5). Ragins & Kram point out that mentors provide positive exposure by coaching and offering protection to the protégé. Eby (2004) points out that career-related support refers to mentor behaviors that are oriented toward helping the protégé understand how the organization works and preparing the protégé for advancement. Sponsorship and providing challenging assignments are also associated with career-related mentoring.

Psychosocial functions are those aspects of the mentor relationship that influence emotional security, self–assurance, confidence, and aptitude of the protégé in the professional role. In psychosocial functions, the mentor will act as a role model and help give purpose and substance to organizational tasks by giving the protégé friendship or counseling when needed. Mentors are highly related to both psychosocial support and career indicators, but research finds more career-related support in most mentor/mentee relationships (Allen, 2004).

D.   TYPES OF MENTOR RELATIONSHIPS

There are two types of mentoring relationships that are important to examine. An informal mentoring relationship is spontaneous and occurs between two people without the involvement, support, or formal recognition of the organization (Chao, Walz & Garner, 1992). In informal mentoring relationships, the pairing evolves naturally based upon mutual identification and interests. Conversely, formal mentoring relationships are developed with organizational assistance, whereby protégés and mentors are matched through some process. Formal mentoring relationships are created through programs that are managed and endorsed by the organization (Chao, Walz & Garner, 1992). Formal mentoring relationships are usually designed for a limited duration, such as one year. One of the primary benefits of formal mentoring programs is that they can be structured to achieve a variety of objectives such as the career development of high-potential individuals, advancement of women and minorities, and enhanced knowledge-sharing inside the organization. To motivate mentors to actively participate in such programs, it is important to consider the potential benefits and costs that formal mentors may incur.

1.   Informal Mentor Relationships

Informal mentoring relationships can be looked upon as a natural development of a mentor–protégé relationship. Informal mentoring relationships typically develop from the vocational needs of the subordinate and higher personnel. These relationships develop out of perceived competence and interpersonal comfort (e.g., Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997; Kram, 1983, 1985; Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Mentors tend to lean towards individuals who standout, excel, or are considered high-performers. Mentors who share an informal mentoring relationship regularly report that they experience joy from working with someone with whom they share a common goal or understanding in the organization (Kram, 1983, 1985). Informal mentors are typically focused on the long-term growth of their protégés. Kram (1985) suggests that informal relationships usually last three to six years in contrast to formal relationships that, according to Zey (1985) last, by design, six months to a year. Ragins and Cotton (1999) found that mentors in

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informal relationships unsurprisingly spend more time providing career and psychosocial support than their formal counterparts, and have a greater feeling of overall satisfaction with their mentees. Allen & Eby (2003) suggest that informal mentors provide more of these growth functions because they are participating at their own discretion, rather because they are required to. Chao and Walz (1992) came to the conclusion that informal mentoring relationships were related to more career-related support and found mentees in these relationships reported higher salaries than their peers with formal mentors. Informal mentoring relationships can be a great attribute to career and personal performance, but the problem is actually finding someone willing to be an informal mentor who will invest the time needed to benefit the mentee's career.

2. Formal Mentor Relationships

Approximately 71% of Fortune 500 companies report that they currently have one or more formal mentoring programs (Bridgeford, 2007). Formal mentoring relationships occur as part of an administratively supported program or initiative where a third party in the organization assists the matching of mentors and protégés (Allen, 2001; Eby, 2007). In this type of relationship, a contract is typically negotiated with formal goals, expectations and objectives.

Formal mentoring programs sometimes have negative perceptions. Formal mentoring programs limit the choices available to mentor and protégés, provide no flexibility in establishing connection (e.g., Chao & Walz, 1992; Zey, 1988), and are usually assigned on a foundation of request by mentors and protégés. A common perception is that formal mentoring is for at risk performers only; thus, individuals who go into such relationships are there because they need special attention (Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Scandura & Williams, 2001). This harmful perception could deter participation.

Ragins & Cotton (1999) also suggest formal mentoring relationships may result in a mismatch making the atmosphere uncomfortable. This could in turn lead to a lower motivation and initiative to provide guidance and time to the protégé. Some examples of mismatches are age difference, background, race, gender, and even religious beliefs

(Burke, McKeen, & McKenna, 1994; Noe, 1988; Raabe & Beehr, 2003). Ragins & Cotton (1999) performed a study of 94 mentors in technology firms and found that mentors and protégés with comparable backgrounds, work approaches, and interests reported having greater mentoring functions compared to other mentoring relationships without the similar traits. Findings suggest that the more personality traits the mentor and protégé have in common, the more successful the mentoring might be (Burke, et al., 1994; Noe, 1998; Raabe &Beehr, 2003; Ragins & Cotton, 1999). However, this is not the widespread reality, or we would see that all mentoring programs would merely match mentoring dyads with comparable traits (Eby, 2004).

Formal mentoring takes time and resources but can be successful if approached in a logical way. Similarities of the mentor and protégé seem to be a feasible place to start. Having an open mind and constructive thoughts towards a formal mentoring program seems to be the best approach. The potential benefit of the formal program comes at a cost to the organization because providing corresponding, designated mentoring time, protégé, and program management can keep participants from implementing other tasks for the organization (Kram, 1985; Ragins & Cotton, 1999).

Formal mentorship programs have become required in the military. The mentoring process is no longer only a voluntary. The Commandant of the Marine Corps has made it a requirement that all Marines (regardless of rank) will have an assigned mentor. Hierarchical organizations, such as the military (Gibson, 1998) and university programs (Raabe & Beehr, 2003; Scandura & Williams, 2004), often assign the immediate supervisor as the mentor. Supervisors are believed to provide better sway over their protégé's career developmental opportunities than non-supervisory mentors (Raabe & Beehr, 2003; Scandura & Williams, 2004).

The perception of mentor benefits of formal mentoring programs may be related to the method used to match the pairs. Mentoring programs vary in the amount and form of participation in the matching process (Finkelstein & Poteet, 2007). Allowing the mentor to have a say in the selection process, rather than simply having a third party

make the mentor–protégé´ assignments, provides the mentor with more control over the relationship (Allen, 2006) and may increase the likelihood that additional benefits will be derived from the program. According to the similarity-attraction paradigm, individuals are attracted to those they perceive as more similar to themselves. The ability to be able to choose a protégé´ who is perceived to be compatible, and who shares similar interests, goals, or background with the mentor should make communication easier and the relationship more enjoyable (2000; Roberts & O'Reilly, 1979). Research has found greater mentor–protégé´ similarity to be related to mentors' reports of higher quality relationships and learning. Furthermore, recent research has shown mentor input to the matching process to be related to greater commitment of the mentor and enhanced understanding of the mentoring program; both of which positively influenced the perceived effectiveness of the program (Allen, 2006). Also, mentors who had a voice in the matching process perceived the mentoring relationship to be of higher quality and provided greater career mentoring (Allen, 2006). Overall, having input to the matching process should increase the likelihood that mentors should derive more benefits from the experience.

Inadequate training of the participants can cause frustration and may keep the mentoring relationship at a superficial level (Kram & Hall, 1996). Training should include an explanation of the objectives of the program, a discussion of the career and psychosocial functions, tactical suggestions on individual goal setting, guidance on how often to meet, and other items to facilitate communication and the development of a personal relationship. Inadequate training increases the likelihood that goals of the program will not be achieved. This can be due to lack of ambiguity that mentors experience and understanding of their roles and responsibilities (Eby & Lockwood, 2005; Gibb, 1999) and inability to handle difficult problems that might arise. The level of management support is also expected to impact the benefits perceived by mentors.

However, very little research has examined this issue. One recent study by Eby, Lockwood, and Butts (2006) found that mentors who perceived management support for mentoring were more likely to view mentoring as beneficial to both mentors and

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protégé's. Visible and sincere support by management serves as a message to the entire organization of the importance of the program and that mentoring serves a valuable role within the organization (Gibb, 1994). The commitment of the CEO in the Sontag, Vappie, and Wanberg (2007) case study was cited as an important factor to the success of that program. The support of management helps ensure that resources are available to facilitate the success of the program. Therefore, mentors should have higher expectations that the efforts they expend will result in achievement of the desired outcomes (Nadler & Lawler, 2001). In general, mentors are more likely to perceive benefits (e.g., recognition) from participating in the program when they believe it is valued by management.

This literature review includes over 35 journal articles, books, and professional publications. Earlier research focused on mentorship and was administered to gather a thorough grasp of the concept of mentoring. My assessment evaluated those influences on the mentor–protégé association and the communal manners that are often distinctive of mentors. A mentor must possess certain traits, ideals, and willingness to be an effective guidance tool. These drives, communal behaviors, and mentor roles have formerly been revealed, as discussed in the literature review, to affect a superior's performance to be an efficient mentor.

E.   MARINE CORPS MENTORSHIP

The Marine Corps has recently drafted guidance to implement a mentoring program. The guidance was drafted to help provide Marines the opportunity to reach their full potential and help shape future leaders while also strengthening their sense of camaraderie in the Marine Corps. The MCMP was inspired by a cultural study conducted by the Center for Naval Analysis, Behavioral Science Technology. This was done after awareness of a gap in the Marine leadership generated concern. Mentoring was seen as a potential remedy.

The MCMP was thus set up to allow Marines to share leadership lessons. The guidance explains how Marines are mentored by a Marine senior to them. The Marine Corps Order explicates how unit, team, and individual mentoring goals should be

established (Hagee, 2006). The MCMP explains also how the Marine could help meet his mission. The mentoring itself occurs at least once a month. Certain scenarios and measures were defined by MCMP as necessary causes for receiving mentoring. This includes preparing for one's deployment or a return from deployment, among others. Mentoring occurs when a person enhances the professional life of someone else by fostering self–insight, identifying needed knowledge, or expanding the other person's perspectives. When mentoring occurs, the mentee learns something that otherwise would be acquired less thoroughly, more slowly, or not at all.

Following orders is of the utmost importance in the Marine Corps and could be considered the central core value of the MCMP. Understanding the concept of the MCMP sheds light on the effectiveness and actual planning and use of this program. Obedience is what enables the Marine Corps to operate in an organized and effective manner, which is clearly very important during challenging Marine Corps situations. While an individual can question the notion of obedience in daily life, this luxury is often not available in the Marine Corps where the grand goals and aims require smooth internal functioning and hierarchical coordination. Indeed, many of the standards that would be frowned upon outside the Marine Corps are essential to the works success within. For example, punishment is not deemed to be a positive occurrence in an average person's life, whereas the Marine Corps guide maintains that punishment strengthens one's determination and discipline and enables a person to learn and fully take the importance of following orders in. Not following orders is not an optional choice that recruits can make upon joining the Marines. The act of disobedience is considered to be an infraction, and a person who placed himself in such a situation can find himself facing Article 15 charges. Thus, respect and obedience is of the utmost significance in the Marine Corps as it helps maintain the internal structure and enables the Marine Corps therefore to carry out its operations in confidence.

The purpose of the MCMP is to ensure the deliverance of services that promote justice. Marines can ensure that this goal is met by assisting commanders to maintain order and discipline and by promoting efficiency and effectiveness within the Marine

Corps. Commanders and leaders have been beforehand selected carefully on the basis of their demonstrated judgment and abilities. On the other hand, leaders' responsibility and authority over their subordinates is closely related to the decisions and actions taken to ensure the readiness and accomplishment of the mission. Sun Tzu summarized these main elements of effective Marine Corps leadership when he succinctly stated,

> Soldier must be treated in the first instance with humanity, but kept under control by means of iron discipline. This is a certain road to victory. If in training soldiers, commands are habitually enforced, the army will be well disciplined. If the general shows confidence in his men but always insists on his orders being obeyed, the gain will be mutual-Sun Tzu.

In conclusion, it has become clear that maintaining an atmosphere of good order is important to ensure how people perceive their surroundings. In the Marine Corps, this atmosphere ensures trust, efficiency, and coherence between ranks, which promotes stability and happiness due to a reduced amount of stress resulting from knowing that one can rely on others around him. A good atmosphere is also created by consistency. A leader who is consistent in the treatment of subordinates and the issuance of orders and the maintenance of discipline ensures such an atmosphere in the Marine Corps. Commanders have been trained to treat Marines equally and promote discipline through enforcing orders. Insubordination is not tolerated as it can affect a Marine Corps unit and destroy all existing discipline. It is therefore of crucial importance to maintain the standards set by the Marine Corps with regard to following orders and showing one's respect, trustworthiness, honesty, and commitment to the work. This is simply not a negotiable aspect of Marine Corps life.

F.   CONCLUSION

More and more organizations are looking at mentoring as a critical tool for organizational success in the workplace either if it's formal or informal mentoring. Each has its pros and cons. The advantage of having a senior role model to coach and guide a protégé both professionally and personally could pay dividends not only for protégés but

for the mentor and organization as well. Mentoring expertise and the examples senior leadership can offer can be invaluable to the Marine leaders of tomorrow.

This study examines the perceived effectiveness of the MCMP and makes recommendations for improvements. The MCMP guidance is that every Marine regardless of rank will have access and tools to a mentor from the lowest enlisted to the most senior of officers. In the pursuit of making Marines more productive, the program was enacted and meant to ensure Marines reach their full potential personally and professionally, help shape future leaders, increase unit cohesion, reinforce solidarity, foster relationships of genuine concern and better prepare Marines to handle the increased challenges of today's operational climate. This study explores and documents the initial motivation and implementation plan of the program and assesses the extent to which the actual implementation is consistent with the program. It examines how extensively the program is used and also examines mentors' and protégés' assessments of the program.

III. METHODS

This study examines how extensively the program is used and how mentors and protégés assess the program. This research is based on a Marine Corps fleet unit who was asked to participate in a survey pertaining to the implementation of the MCMP. Roughly 300 Marines choose to participate, many of whom serve in leadership positions, as mentors, or as protégés in some capacity. Three hundred and five usable surveys were returned, for a response rate of approximately 50%.

The survey was designed to explore the extent to which the implementation of the MCMP is consistent with the original plan. The draft survey was reviewed and approved by selected Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) professors as well as vetted for effectiveness by several NPS students.

The survey emphasized the MCMP and its current utilization and responses were sought from Marine officers and enlisted (in leadership positions). I sought to understand their experiences as both mentors and protégés stationed in a Marine Corps fleet unit.. Additionally, the survey included various question sets that covered the specific actions taken by mandatory, assigned mentors in their mentor–protégé relationships, as well as their overall enforcement and usage of the MCMP. The goal was to find out the experience of being mentored by an MCMP assigned mentor. Next, the interest was focused on experiences of being mentored by an unassigned mentor (individuals who are not the MCMP–assigned mentor). This was to get a comparison on mentoring and advice by someone other than the MCMP–assigned mentor. Lastly, the survey included short answer questions designed to capture the officers' perspectives of the mandatory mentorship program in the Marine Corps. The survey also requested individual demographic information. The sampling frame for this study consisted of officers in the ranks of O-1 (Second Lieutenant) through O-6 (Colonel) and any enlisted ranks at a leadership positions. The resulting sample totaled 305 Marines currently stationed in a selected Marine Fleet unit.

A.   DATA

Data were collected through a survey. An e-mail was sent to a Marine Corps fleet unit of over 600 Marines asking them to participate in a survey pertaining to the implementation of the MCMP. Over 300 participants choose to complete the survey. Among the respondents, 63.5% (191) are in leadership positions, and are thus required to mentor Marines. Approximately 64% of the participants annotated that their billet presently requires that they mentor Marines.

B.   DATA ANALYSIS.

I adopted a qualitative and descriptive approach. I read through all of the responses to gain an understanding of the data. I then categorized the responses and placed representative quotes in tables to allow comparison. This analysis was then used as the basis for recommendations for improving identified shortcomings.

IV.   ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

A.   INTRODUCTION

The data for this research was collected through a survey. The survey was designed to get a sense of how the MCMP is used and perceived and to explore the extent to which the implementation of the MCMP is consistent with the plan emplaced. Many definitions of mentoring exist in the literature today. The mentoring definition utilized in this study is based on the MCMP Guidebook, NAVMC Directive 1500.58.   The MCMP Guidebook states a mentor is defined as a "wise adviser, teacher and guardian."

Data from this survey documents the motivation, goals, and implementation plan of the program. The analysis assesses the extent to which the actual implementation is consistent with the plan and examines how extensively the program is used, along with mentors' and protégés' assessments of the program (Appendix A shows a copy of the survey). The survey also includes question sets to collect data on the efficacy of assigned and unassigned mentors' behaviors. Finally, the survey contains qualitative questions about thoughts on the MCMP and its utilization. These data are used to in order to make recommendations for improving identified shortcomings.

Chapter 4 describes the data collection, analysis and results of the study. First, I quantify the data by providing the number of survey respondents, describing the types of questions asked, and indicating the level of responses provided to the open-ended questions in the survey. Second, a data analysis on the MCMP breaks the responses into the following categories: awareness, extent/frequency of use, career and psychosocial support, and the perception of/satisfaction with the MCMP. Third, I compare the MCMP and informal mentoring, drawing on the academic literature.

B.   SAMPLE

A unit in the Marine Corps fleet was asked to participate in a survey pertaining to the implementation of the MCMP. This included approximately 600 Marines, many of whom serve in leadership positions, as mentors, or as protégés in some capacity. Three hundred and five usable surveys were returned, for a response rate of approximately 51%. The survey consisted of 56 forced-choice and six open-ended questions. There were over 68 pages of responses to the open-ended questions. Additionally, there were over 19 pages of unsolicited responses to the query "Other," which allowed participants to add additional thoughts. Among the respondents, 63.5% (191) are in leadership positions, and are thus required to mentor Marines. Among the respondents, 116 participants (38.5%) have been at the command less than one year, 78 (25.9%) have been there at least one year, 68 (22.6%) have been there over two years, 18 (6%) have been there three years, and 21 (7%) have been there more than three years. Approximately 64 % of the participants noted that their billet currently requires that they mentor Marines. Table one summarizes characteristics of the survey participants.

Table 1.   SAMPLE

	What is your pay grade/rank?		Are you currently required to mentor Marines?	
	Response percentage	Response count	Yes	No
E1-E3	36.2%	109	14	95
E4-E5	35.5%	107	98	9
E6-E9	20.9%	63	60	3
O1-O3	5.0%	15	12	3
O4-O6	2.3%	7	7	0

C.   AWARENESS FACTOR OF MCMP

A data analysis of the MCMP (receiving mentoring) first evaluated how well the participants knew the program. In order to assess the respondents' familiarity with the MCMP, an array of questions was presented. The majority of the participants in the survey were aware of the MCMP (99.7%). An average of 24.4% either did not have an MCMP mentor or had not had an MCMP mentor in the past. Approximately 22% had not read the MCMP policy. When asked, *How well do you understand the overall objectives of the MCMP and what is expected according to program,* approximately 71% responded that they understood the program fairly well or completely, while 29% responded that they understood the program either somewhat well or not at all. This shows that approximately one-third of the participants did not have an understanding of the mandatory MCMP, which is unacceptable by Marine Corps standards. Table 2 summarizes these data.

Table 2.   AWARENESS FACTOR OF MCMP

	Aware of the MCMP?	Read the MCMP Policy?	Currently have an assigned MCMP mentor?	Assigned MCMP in the past?
Yes	99.7%	78.1%	73.8%	77.4%
No	0.3%	21.9%	26.2%	22.6%

Note. The total number of participants was 301; four participants did not answer every question on the survey.

D.   EXTENT/FREQUENCY OF MCMP

The extent or frequency of the MCMP sessions was also measured in the survey. On average, 15.65% of respondents never had scheduled or unscheduled MCMP sessions, while approximately 50% formally met with their mentor on a monthly basis. Roughly 36.5% of respondents indicated that the length of their mentoring sessions was

"10 to 30 minutes," while an average of 18.7% met at least once a year or never. This shows that only half the participants were actually meeting according to the prescribed or recommended schedule, and one-sixth of mentors never formally met with their Marines. Table 3 summarizes these data.

Table 3.   EXTENT/FREQUENCY OF MCMP

	How often do you formally meet with assigned MCMP mentor for mentoring?		How often do you receive mentoring guidance and advice from your MCMP mentor outside scheduled sessions?	
	Response percentage	Response count	Response percentage	Response count
Daily	6.3%	19	25%	75
Weekly	9.3%	28	31.7%	95
Monthly	50.2%	151	16.7%	50
Every few months	14.3%	43	12.3%	37
Once a year	3.7%	11	0%	0
Less than once a year	1.7%	5	0.7%	2
Never	14.6%	44	16.7%	50

E.   CAREER/PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT USING MCMP

Questions about career and psychosocial support from the MCMP mentor were asked to get an overall measure of effectiveness. To be clear, career support addresses professional needs (i.e., help with promotion), and psychosocial support addresses the personal aspects (i.e., family issues) of a Marine's life. First, the career aspect of the MCMP mentor was analyzed with the following statements shown in Table 4.

Table 4.   CAREER SUPPORT USING MCMP

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
MCMP mentor takes personal interest in career.	2.4%	3.7%	17.6%	49.8%	19.3%	7.1%
MCMP mentor helps coordinate my professional goals.	3.1%	4.1%	19.3%	48.1%	18%	7.5%
MCMP mentor devotes time and consideration to my career.	2.4%	8.8%	28.2%	38.8%	13.6%	8.2%

Note. The total number of participants was 295; ten participants did not answer every question on the survey.

Approximately 63% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that their MCMP mentors affected their careers in a positive way. That being said, approximately 27% either strongly disagreed, disagreed, or were unsure that their MCMP mentors affected their careers in a positive and constructive manner. This means that approximately one-third of the participants felt they were not getting helpful or any career support. Unsolicited responses pertaining to career effectiveness varied. The following examples illustrate participants' concerns:

- "My Mentor, who is a SNCO, has **NEVER** mentored myself professionally. I do not even have a training jacket."

- "Seems like we push to make sure our Marines are in the program, but as an Officer... I've never had an assigned Mentor, although I do have people I go to for guidance and advice."
- "My mentor has refused to send me to the rifle range, even though I've held an 'UNQ' on my record for almost a year, and our operational tempo allows for me to miss 2 weeks becoming qualified in a basic Marine Skill."

The psychosocial aspect of the MCMP mentor was analyzed by asking respondents to evaluate the following statements shown in Table 5.

Table 5.   PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT USING MCMP

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
Share personal problems with my MCMP mentor	6.8%	11.8%	28.7%	36.1%	8.8%	7.8%
Exchange confidences with my MCMP mentor	6.8%	8.2%	24.8%	41.5%	10.5%	8.2%
Consider my MCMP mentor to be a friend	4.7%	9.8%	32.8%	31.8%	12.2%	8.8%

Note. The total number of participants was 295; ten participants did not answer every question on the survey.

Approximately 47% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that their MCMP mentors affected their personal lives in a positive manner. That being said, approximately 53% either strongly disagreed, disagreed, or were unsure that their MCMP

mentors actually provided psychosocial support in a constructive manner. Unsolicited and open-ended responses pertaining to psychosocial effectiveness varied. The following comments illustrate some of participants' concerns:

- "I choose not to discuss personal issues that may lead my mentor (AKA boss) to think I cannot take care of my personal issue at home, it could lead him to believe I cannot be relied on me at work. It is better left unsaid."

- "I had not have a mentor; however, Marines tend not to discuss personal issues as their superiors tend to see it as a weakness and a compare it to performance when the two are not related. It may affect it but not related."

- "I like the idea of the mentoring program, but I find that no matter what rank you are most mentors and mentees first don't choose each other and second don't feel they can talk about personal things. I know from my experience that I would tell my mentor something and my mentor would tell the command which seems like a sense of betrayal. This was nothing that was harmful to me, but it bothers me."

- "In my experience, most Marines view any personal problem as a weakness. I have not received support from mentors in the past."

The statements showed that the participants did not feel they could trust their mentors enough to divulge personal issues. Participants seemed to be concerned about how the mentor may view the protégé. Some protégés may have felt that sharing any personal problems or issues showed a sign of weakness.

F.   PERCEPTIONS OF MCMP

Approximately 39% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the MCMP was beneficial and valuable and were overall satisfied with the program as of right then. That being said, approximately 61% either strongly disagreed, disagreed, or were unsure that the MCMP was actually beneficial, satisfying, or even valuable, and even believed that the program was a waste of time. Table 6 summarizes these data.

Table 6.   MCMP PRECEPTIONS

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am satisfied with the MCMP.	9.2%	11.9%	39.6%	36.2%	3.1%
MCMP is a waste of time.	10.2%	29.8%	35.9%	15.3%	8.8%
The MCMP is a valuable program.	4.7%	9.8%	32.8%	31.8%	12.2%
MCMP has been beneficial to me.	11.2%	13.2%	42.6%	30.1%	3%

Note. The total number of participants was 293; twelve participants did not answer every question on the survey.

Unsolicited and open-ended responses pertaining to Marine's perceptions of the program's effectiveness were collected. Some participants gave positive comments, such are ""THE PROGRAM IS VERY EFFECTIVE" (capitalization is participant's), and many noted the importance of mentoring. However, as above many participants described concerns. The following examples illustrate participants' concerns:

- "The Marine Corps mentoring program is irrelevant in many aspects. As a mentee and only a mentee I see firsthand over and over how assigned mentors are not effective on the count of they look at mentoring as a task. Marine corps always did fine on taking advice from fellow marines and making role models of themselves for others to follow."

- "Marines should be given the time to actually conduct the required mentoring program. We all know that mission comes first, but without the Marines we cannot accomplish the mission."

- "More time should be devoted to it in order to make it feasible. A few

years ago, we had specific times allotted to us every week to meet with our mentees. Then, it turned to more of a 'once a month pencil whip the mentor binder.' Now, it is nowhere to be seen in this unit. No mention of it ever—except when a junior Marine gets in trouble has to go stand in front of the Commanding Officer—then he/she must be accompanied by their mentor."

- "I generally just don't agree that this program can be effective when it's forced like MCMP is. I believe that it is absolutely vital to have a guide as life in the military is difficult and there are lots of issues that require the guidance and experience of someone with experience in dealing with those complex issues. I think that the mentoring happens naturally based on respect and that this program formalizes a process that really doesn't need that kind of structure. I've seen time and time again MCMP logs being treated as more of a burden than a benefit, and would like to see the requirement of the program relaxed. Our Marines should also, be allowed to choose their own mentors."

- "While this program was conceptualized with the best of intentions, its execution is in dire need of re-evaluation. Marines need to be able to select their mentor from whomever they choose; commands are not allowing this to happen. The current program is 'counseling.' Mentorship should be something that is on an as needed basis. A mentor is someone whom you emulate, not someone that was assigned to you and gives you an on schedule session to cover some useless point that is written in a mentoring book."

- "From what I have seen, the MCMP is essentially ineffective because there is simply not enough time in the day to accomplish the requirements of the 'formal' program. I absolutely believe that mentoring does happen and is essential, but under the current construct I think it is not meeting its desired effect. I think it is a valuable program if it could be implemented

the way that it was intended, but there are simply too many competing

requirements for many assignments/billets/duty stations/etc., to do it right.

My only hope is that the informal mentoring is continuing to go on as it

has from generation to generation of Marines, previously called leadership

and troop welfare and developing subordinates."

The statements show that the participants had varying responses when asked about how they perceived the effectiveness of the MCMP. Many noted that there was simply not enough time to conduct formal mentoring. Tedious paperwork and being assigned mentors were also problems annotated. Some responses indicated that the respondents felt that the MCMP is effective as is.

G. MCMP VS. INFORMAL MENTORING

A comparison of the MCMP versus informal mentoring was initiated in the survey in order to get an accurate and effective reading of the different types of mentoring that Marines received during their time in service. An analysis on the MCMP (mandatory mentoring guidance) and informal mentoring (naturally occurring) broke the data into the following categories: extent/frequency of use, career and psychosocial support, and the perception/satisfaction variances.

In order to see the extent/frequency of use between the two types of mentoring (MCMP versus Informal Mentoring) available in the Marine Corps, I evaluated the following statements shown in Table 7 (pertains to the usage of the MCMP mentor) and Table 8 (which pertains to the usage of an unassigned mentor).

Table 7.   MCMP Mentor usage

	How often do you formally meet with assigned MCMP mentor for mentoring?	How often do you receive mentoring guidance and advice from your MCMP mentor outside scheduled sessions?
	Response percentage	Response percentage
Daily	6.3%	25%
Weekly	9.3%	31.7%
Monthly	50.2%	16.7%
Every few months	14.3%	12.3%
Once a year	3.7%	0%
Less than once a year	1.7%	0.7%

Note. The total number of participants was 301; four participants did not answer every question on the survey.

Table 8.   Unassigned Mentor usage

	Role of unassigned mentor you frequently go to for advice		Frequency with which you go to unassigned vs. assigned MCMP mentor
	Response percentage		Response percentage
Formal supervisor	19.4%	100% unassigned mentor	19%
Peer-level co-worker	20.7%	80% unassigned 20% MCMP mentor	19.4%
Senior co-worker, not a supervisor	25.9%	60% unassigned 40% MCMP mentor	21.4%
Personal friend (not co-worker)	15.6%	20% unassigned 80% MCMP mentor	15%
Other, please describe	5.1%	100% MCMP mentor	2%
Do not have a unassigned mentor	13.3%	Not applicable	23.1%

Note. The total number of participants was 294; eleven participants did not answer every question on the survey.

Normally, a Marine's assigned MCMP mentor is his or her immediate supervisor. A Marine's immediate supervisor provides pro/cons remarks and Fitness Report marks (FITREP), which can affect his or her career. That being said, when asked who Marines typically go to for advice 25.9% (highest percentage) of respondents said that they preferred a senior coworker who was not their supervisor. In fact, 79.6% preferred to go to someone else for mentoring besides their formal supervisor, who was typically assigned as the MCMP mentor. When comparing the frequency of using their assigned MCMP mentor and an unassigned mentor, approximately 60% had a higher percentage of usage of their unassigned mentor while only 40 % sought guidance from their MCMP mentor. The data indicate that only one-fifth of participants actually prefer to go to their MCMP mentor in place of an unassigned mentor. This preference is illustrated in the following examples from the "other" responses:

- "I used to go to my assigned mentor for advice, but after he expresses NO interest in helping me further my career but only his, I have found advice elsewhere."

- "My unassigned mentor and I are much more open about our personal lives because we have formed a truer friendship."

H. CAREER/PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT USING UNASSIGNED MENTORS

Questions were asked about career and psychosocial support from unassigned mentors to get an overall measure of effectiveness compared to an assigned mentor and an unassigned mentor. First, the career support aspect was evaluated using the following statements shown in Table 9 (MCMP mentor) and Table 10 (unassigned mentor):

Table 9.   MCMP Mentor (career support)

295 responses	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
MCMP mentor takes personal interest in career.	2.4%	3.7%	17.6%	49.8%	19.3%	7.1%
MCMP mentor helps coordinate my professional goals.	3.1%	4.1%	19.3%	48.1%	18%	7.5%
MCMP devotes time and consideration to my career.	2.4%	8.8%	28.2%	38.8%	13.6%	8.2%

Note. The total number of participants was 295; ten participants did not answer every question on the survey.

Table 10.   Unassigned Mentor (career support)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
Unassigned mentor takes personal interest in career.	2.0%	0.3%	22.2%	41.2%	24.2%	9.9%
Unassigned mentor helps coordinate my professional goals.	1.4%	1.4%	27%	41.2%	18.9%	10.1%
Unassigned mentor devotes time and consideration to my career.	1.7%	2.7%	31.4%	35.5%	18.2%	10.5%

Note. The total number of participants was 296; nine participants did not answer every question on the survey.

Approximately 63% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that their MCMPs affected their careers in a positive way, compared to 60% who responded that unassigned mentors affected them in a positive manner. That being said, approximately 30% either strongly disagreed, disagreed, or were unsure that an unassigned mentor actually helped endorse their career support in a constructive manner. Unsolicited responses pertaining to career effectiveness varied. These unsolicited responses suggest that over one-third of the participants go to the unassigned mentor when needing psychosocial support. The following are examples of participants' statements:

- "My unassigned mentor is the one who has helped me get my OCS package together as well as secure my school seat for MCIWS."

- "Usually do when or if I ask (very rare). I usually go to my unassigned mentor for more personal issues."

- "This individual has no impact on my professional goals; I speak with him more for personal issues."

The psychosocial aspect of the MCMP mentor compared to the unassigned mentor was analyzed by asking respondents to evaluate the statements shown in Table 11 and Table 12.

Table 11.   MCMP Mentor (psychosocial support)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
Share personal problems with my MCMP mentor	6.8%	11.8%	28.7%	36.1%	8.8%	7.8%
Exchange confidences with my MCMP mentor	6.8%	8.2%	24.8%	41.5%	10.5%	8.2%
Consider my MCMP mentor to be a friend	4.7%	9.8%	32.8%	31.8%	12.2%	8.8%

Table 12.   Unassigned Mentor (psychosocial support)

295 answered these questions	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
Share personal problems with my unassigned mentor	3.4%	3.7%	26.4%	36.6%	20%	9.8%
Exchange confidences with my unassigned mentor	2.0%	2.0%	24.3%	42.2%	19.6%	9.8%
Consider my unassigned mentor to be a friend	1.4%	0.7%	24.7%	37.5%	26%	9.8%

Note. The total number of participants was 295; ten participants did not answer every question on the survey.

Approximately 47% of participants either agreed or strongly agreed that their MCMP mentors affected their personal lives in a positive manner, compared to approximately 61% who provided these responses about an unassigned mentor. That being said, only 39% of respondents either strongly disagreed, disagreed, or were unsure that an unassigned mentor actually provided psychosocial support in a constructive manner. The data show that 14% of participants would automatically go to their unassigned mentor for help with personal issues in place of the MCMP mentor. Unsolicited and open-ended responses pertaining to psychosocial effectiveness varied in their assessments.. The following are examples of what was stated about why the participants might prefer their unassigned mentor when discussing personal or other issues:

- "Having other Marines outside of your chain of command hear a situation and tell whether the COC handled a situation wrong or something of that nature is always good to have."

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- "My unassigned mentor is someone who you can vent to and discuss things with. You can bounce ideas off them, but you can to make your own decisions in the end."
- "I've received more out of my unassigned mentor in the past 4 months than any other formal mentoring in my 9-year career thus far."

I. PERCEPTIONS OF MCMP VS. UNASSIGNED MENTORING CONCEPT

Approximately 39% of participants either agreed or strongly agreed that their MCMPs were effective in a positive way, compared to approximately 64% who either agreed or strongly agreed that an unassigned mentoring concept affected them in a positive manner. That being said, only 26% either strongly disagreed, disagreed, or were unsure that an unassigned mentor actually provided psychosocial support in a constructive manner. These data are summarized in Table 13 and Table 14.

Table 13.   MCMP Concept

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am satisfied with the MCMP.	9.2%	11.9%	39.6%	36.2%	3.1%
MCMP is a waste of time.	10.2%	29.8%	35.9%	15.3%	8.8%
The MCMP is a valuable program.	4.7%	9.8%	32.8%	31.8%	12.2%
MCMP has been beneficial to me.	11.2%	13.2%	42.6%	30.1%	3%

Table 14. Unassigned Mentoring Concept

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
I am satisfied with my unassigned mentor.	1%	0.7%	22%	45.1%	21.4%	9.8
My unassigned mentor is a waste of time.	23.1%	33.6%	25.8%	3.7%	3.7%	10.2
The mentoring I receive from my unassigned mentor is valuable.	1%	1.4%	20.4%	43.9%	23.8%	9.5
Mentoring from my unassigned mentor has been beneficial to me.	1%	0.07%	24.1%	42%	22.7%	9.5

Note. The total number of participants was 293; twelve participants did not answer every question on the survey.

Unsolicited and open-ended responses pertaining to unassigned mentors were collected, helping to explain why an unassigned mentor may have been the preferable to the MCMP mentor. Some of the following are examples of what was stated:

- "My unassigned mentor helps me with any and all problems I may have professionally or personally."

- "I can talk about anything with my unassigned mentor unlike my MCMP mentor."

- "We talk about everything."

- "I talk with my unassigned mentor about work and the frustrations of our job. We discuss little things that may be bothering us with the way the shop is operating which is nice."

- "There are no limitations on what I tell my unassigned mentor unlike my MCMP mentor. I go to my unassigned mentors to figure out what the best way to deal with my challenges regardless of the situation."

The data show that almost 61% of respondants would choose unassigned mentoring guidance versus their assigned MCMP mentor when it came to measuring outcomes and advice which was of benefit, value and overall satisfaction. Participants remarked that they were able to tell their unassigned mentors "all," "anything," "everything," and "no limitations." These words demonstrate the level of trust and satisfaction that participants felt towards their informal mentors.

J. GIVING MENTORING UNDER THE MCMP

In order to get an idea of how often MCMP mentors met the MCMP-assigned mentees, the following questions, shown in Table 15 were asked to gauge the amount and duration of the mentoring sessions.

Table 15. Giving Mentoring under the MCMP

	How often do you formally meet with assigned MCMP mentees for mentoring? (289 respondents, 16 skipped)	How often do you give mentoring guidance and advice to your MCMP mentee outside scheduled sessions? (273 respondents, 32 skipped)
	Response percentage	Response percentage
Daily	5.2%	31.9%
Weekly	10.7%	26.4%
Monthly	41.9%	12.8%
Every few months	9.7%	2.6%
Once a year	1.4%	0.4%
Less than once a year	1%	0.4%
Never	30.1%	25.6%

Note. The total number of participants was 305.

An average of 28% of respondents never formally mentored their mentees through scheduled sessions or outside of scheduled sessions. About 83.4% indicated that the un-scheduled mentoring sessions typically lasted at least 10 to 30 minutes. Approximately 41.1% said that their mentoring sessions lasted less than 10 minutes. Approximately one-third of mentors admitted to never formally meeting their MCMP mentees as directed for mentoring. When asked, "Do you have the personal skills you need to positively mentor your assigned MCMP mentees?" approximately 15% answered no. Unsolicited responses pertaining to providing mentoring sessions to their protégés were collected. The following is an example of what was stated:

- "I provide guidance and mentorship (as asked under the MCMP guidance) to those junior Marines of which I am their RS, but I believe officially a mentor is not supposed to be in the direct chain of command."

The research suggests that formal mentoring is not occurring enough and that the assigned mentor should not be within the protégé's chain of command. Individuals who do not feel they have the personal skill to mentor obviously should not be assigned as mentor unless and until they gain the needed skills. The lack of personal skills puts the mentee at a great disadvantage when it comes to mentoring and guidance needed to succeed.

The following question, shown in Table 16, was asked to gauge how often a mentor provided guidance and advice to their protégé, whether unassigned or mandatory.

Table 16.   Unassigned Mentoring Concept

	How often do you give mentoring guidance and advice to protégés who are not assigned to you in unscheduled meetings? (268 respondents, 37skipped)
	Response percentage
Daily	26.6%
Weekly	29.9%
Monthly	12.3%
Every few months	6.7%
Once a year	1.5%
Less than once a year	0%
Never	22.8%

Note. The total number of participants was 305.

The survey responses suggested that mentors are 3 times more likely to advise and give guidance to an unassigned mentor versus their assigned MCMP mentee. Roughly 24.1% (highest chosen) of participants annotated that they mentored six or more unassigned mentees. Unsolicited and open-ended responses pertaining unassigned mentors were collected, which varied. The following are examples of what was stated about unassigned mentees and the willingness to mentor in an informal capacity:

- "They come with issues; I give advice dependent on the knowledge I have in that field."

- "Junior Marines always ask me for advice informally."

K.   SHORT ANSWER

Six open-ended, short-answer questions were given throughout the survey. Two questions focused on what protégés would avoid discussing with their mentors, either MCMP assigned or unassigned. Two questions focused on whether mentors had the personal skills to efficiently mentor Marines in general. The two other questions

focused on thoughts of improvement or anything the respondents wanted to contribute towards the MCMP. Detailed results are included in Appendix B.

The first set of questions asked, "What topics (if any) do you avoid discussing with your MCMP assigned mentor as well as your unassigned mentor?" Of the 305 participants, 179 chose to respond to the question pertaining to the assigned MCMP mentor. An overwhelming 81% of respondants avoided discussing personal issues (psychosocial support) with their MCMP mentors. One hundred and fifty-six participants responded to the unassigned mentoring question, and an overwhelming 90% said they were able to talk with their unassigned mentor about almost anything (even things of a personal nature).

The second set of open-ended questions asked, "Do you have the personal skills you need to positively mentor your assigned MCMP mentees?" The same question was asked again, but instead about unassigned mentors. Of the 305 participants, 294 participants chose to comment. Approximately 15% of these said they did not feel they had the personal skills to properly mentor their MCMP mentees or an unassigned mentee.

The last set of open-ended questions asked, "What changes should be made to improve the Marine Corps Mentoring Program? (for mentors and mentees)" and "What other thoughts (if any) about the MCMP or mentoring and receiving mentoring in the Marine Corps would you like to share?" Two hundred and ninety-seven respondents chose to write a comment. Many suggested that the MCMP needed to be less formal, be given allotted times to mentor according to the program, lessen the paperwork in the process, be able to choose a mentor (not assigned one), and mainstream the procedures to simplify the whole process. The following are examples of what was said and how the MCMP could change:

- "Make the process less formal and more personal. When it is required, the mentee feels like it is an obligation of the mentor vise something we do for each other as Marines. Give time allowance for it to actually be done."

- "The MCMP program is far more complicated than required. It is more of a tool to document and ensure individuals are covered in the event that a Marine screws up. A mentor is supposed to be a trusted guide or counselor by the Merriam-Webster definition. When you put guidelines and create process of how this will be accomplished, it defeats the intent of a true mentorship. The program hinders Marines from actually being able to mentor Junior Marines. You spend more time filling out required paperwork and dealing with risk assessments than actually being able to teach a Marine how to be a Marine. The concept seems to be to ensure that the counseling's are happening when needed but the program fails and has become a tool to ensure every little thing about a Marine is documented in the event they do something wrong. You are told to comment on good and bad things but with all the required paperwork that picks apart everything about a Marine, even if you are documenting good things it is in the pretense of being there in the event something goes wrong. Also the topic of 'instructive leadership' that is constantly thrown around nowadays is another way to cover oneself in the event that something bad happens to a Marine. No one really cares what a Marine does unless he or she does impacts their Career. The MCMP has become tool to threaten a Marines Career in the event their junior Marines screw up. In short Mentorship cannot be a 'PROGRAM.' Mentorship has to happen on its own and cannot be forced upon individuals to be truly successful."

- "It needs to be enforced for one. The only time I hear about it is when an IG inspection is coming up and we need to make our mentoring jackets if they happen to ask. Let your mentor be someone else besides your boss (on the personal aspects). If your mentor doesn't write your Fitrep, then you really don't mind letting them in on personal aspects that may arise."

The last open-ended question asked participants if they had any last thoughts on the MCMP. Of the 305 participants, 155 choose to respond to the final question. Some common responses pointed to the unneeded paperwork, usefulness, and overall implementation process. The following are examples of what was said illustrate these trends:

- "Mentorship occurs at many levels and should not require an 'assigned' mentor for our Marines to be mentored. During my observation of the MCMP I have noticed that many Marines are not satisfied with their 'assigned' mentor. I believe that Marines feel obligated to their assigned mentor even though there may be a lack of respect or 'looking up to' as a mentor should have. My personal opinion is that this program is a waste of time and paper. Mentorship is a constant process that is provided from many angles."

- "Good idea, great potential, horrible implementation. The MCMP is a Commanding Generals Inspection item, and that is the only time anyone truly cares about it—at inspection time. If we need binders and 4 different printout sheets to document the mentoring that we do on a continued basis, then there is a need to change something. I don't know what my recommendation would be, but it would be something in the ballpark of implementing designated times, less required paperwork, and possibly the ability to assign mentors outside of the shop that you work in. In a work center of 9 Marines, there isn't enough diversity or experience when 8 of the 9 are ages 19 and under, and all of them are still serving in their first year in the Marines Corps. The ability to mentor Marines from throughout the squadron would be beneficial."

- "The MCMP is good in its intentions, but there is simply not enough time in the day with the other competing requirements to fully execute it in its official capacity as it is currently designed. This is a good program with good intentions, but if anyone is following it to the letter then I would

speculate that it is being 'pencil-whipped.' Regardless of the MCMP, my hope is that mentoring is still occurring."

- "It is too rigid. Senior leaders push it down the throats of subordinates, yet fail most often to conduct mentoring sessions themselves. This program is formally most beneficial for our young Marines who may be out on their own for the first time. As we become more seasoned, we should be encouraged to seek out formal mentors. If having a mentor is a requirement, we should be allowed to pick our own mentor vice having one assigned, to whom we may not feel has the personal or professional skills that we desire."

- "Yes, all Marines need a mentor. The problem typically arises due to time constraints and the program not being enforced and followed through. The senior officers are the worse at it especially to the officers under their control. Your boss should not be your personal mentor. A lot of things could go wrong. Professional and personal issues need to stay separated unless your mentor is open-minded and will not hold personal issues against you. But, it is human nature to judge people differently because of personal mistakes they might have made."

L.   SUMMARY

This chapter reported results of analysis of data collected from a survey instrument that was provided to Marines in a fleet unit. There was a variety of different responses, but the data and analysis suggest that the MCMP needs improvements in many areas in order to be successfully implemented across the Marine Corps. In the next chapter, the overall findings of the study are discussed. Key problems are annotated, as well as possible recommendations on key improvements to better the MCMP execution. Recommendations for future research are also discussed.

V. DISCUSSION

A. INTRODUCTION

This research was designed to describe and assess the perceived effectiveness of the MCMP. The goals of the MCMP are to assist in shaping future leaders, boost unit cohesion, reinforce solidarity, foster relationships, and ensure that Marines can handle the increased challenges of today's operational climate. I examined how extensively the MCMP is used and also examined mentors' and protégés' assessments of the program. I collected data from an online survey and analyzed the data to identify potential problems and make recommendations for improving shortcomings of the MCMP.

BARRIERS

The Marine Corps atmosphere and tempo of operations naturally make mentoring difficult for many troops. Numerous changes of station, many times every two to three years, and constant deployments hinder the development of long-term mentoring relationships. The frequency of retirement after 20 years (or fewer) of military service removes potential senior mentors from the system. The military environment itself is a constant challenge for mentoring relationships. I compare the findings to my own experiences when relevant and point out barriers that were evident from the survey data.

BARRIER 1

The MCMP is mandated by *Marine Corps Order (MCO) 1500.58,* which states, "This Order establishes the policy, format, and guidelines of the MCMP" (Hagee, 2005). Although the structure of the program does not necessarily prevent a Marine from speaking freely in a mentoring session, the formal structure and mandates outlined in the *MCMP Guidebook* seem to leave little room for spontaneous or mentee-directed development of the relationship. The analysis suggests that the formal structure of the MCMP, as perceived by participants, may inhibit its effectiveness. Participants' responses suggest that the mentorships they view as successful are those which have been less formal, developing with the natural ebb and flow of constant interaction, not necessarily the forced interaction imposed by the MCMP. The MCMP was designed to

ensure that every Marine is provided a mentor to guide, educate, and assist him or her in both professional and personal development. Participants' responses suggest that when mentoring feels forced, a true and trusting dialogue may not occur. This begs the question, how and can a Private First Class (PFC) or Lance Corporal (LCPL) relate to a mentor that has no personal affinity or empathy for that Marine? I suggest that this situation could hinder a mentee's ability or desire to share their problems with their formal mentor.

BARRIER 2

The survey suggests that the MCMP should place greater emphasis on the relationship between mentor and mentee, and the mentor needs to have more of a vested interest in getting to know the mentee in order to properly help with problems. Actually having time allotted for the mentors and mentees to talk about topics seemed to be a want among the participants. Many survey participants felt that mentees do not have the opportunity to select their assigned mentor. Responses suggest that the program would be perceived more positively and likely be more effective if mentors could be someone besides a Marine's direct supervisor, particularly for psychosocial or personal mentoring. A mentee is likely hesitant to discuss personal difficulties with the individual tasked with writing his or her FITREP. An ideal mentor would be able to relate personally and professionally to his or her mentee and support the development of trust and respect. The survey responses and my own personal experience indicate that an unassigned mentor may be better suited for these tasks.

BARRIER 3

The MCMP is not enforced. The responses and comments from the survey seem to suggest this issue. For example, a participant said "the only time that some participants hear about formal mentoring sessions is when an Inspector General (IG) inspection is approaching and mentors are required to prepare mentoring jackets for inspection upon request." A unit cannot become proficient at anything if an order is not practiced. If

Marines were to see the MCMP being utilized, practiced, and taken seriously, perhaps more than just 39% of the participants in the survey would feel the program was effective in its intentions.

BARRIER 4

Another concern that seems to be shared by many of the respondents is that the MCMP is far more complicated and inflexible than necessary. It seems to be more of a documentation tool to ensure individuals are covered in the event that a Marine makes a mistake. A mentor should be a trusted guide or counselor, and implementing guidelines and processes of how this should be accomplished defeats the intent of a true mentorship. The program hinders senior Marines from actually being able to mentor junior Marines. Mentors spend more time filling out required paperwork and dealing with risk assessments than actually teaching a Marine how to be a Marine (especially the junior Marines who really need it) by providing guidance. The concept seems to be to ensure that the counseling sessions are happening when needed, but when the program fails, it becomes a tool to ensure that a Marine's every mishap or error in judgment is documented in the event he or she does something wrong. My experience suggests that the required paperwork is used in the event that something goes wrong, even when documenting good things about a Marine; it is in the pretense of being there in the event something goes wrong. The topic of "intrusive leadership" that is commonly used is just another way to cover oneself in the event that something bad happens to a Marine. Many participants felt that leadership really does not care what a Marine does unless he or she could impact the mentors' career. Many respondents felt that the MCMP has become a tool to threaten a Marine's career in the event that their junior Marines make mistakes. In short, mentorship cannot be an enforced evasive and overly cumbersome program but rather should be an agreement between a mentor and mentee, which both parties agree to and feel comfortable with. Mentorship must happen on its own and trust and respect must be built upon both the mentor and mentee in order for the MCMP to truly be successful. Good mentors should want to go out of their way to guide, counsel, and mentor their Marines in a successful manner.

B.   RECOMMENDATIONS

The MCMP is a good idea, with great potential, but unfortunately is poorly implemented. I say the MCMP is a good idea because I know the Marines who receive mentoring informally are typically the ones who stand out among the rest. The Marines who either excel or are troublemakers are the ones who receive the most attention. The Marines who fall somewhere in the middle tend not to have much interaction with mentors. This is why the MCMP was initiated. Everyone deserves the same chance to receive proper guidance and direction while serving in the Marine Corps. Those average Marines who daily perform their missions successfully typically leave the Marine Corps once their contracts are done. "Leaders should influence others in such a way that it builds people up, encourages and edifies them so they can duplicate this attitude in others (Gibson, 2010)." If mentoring in the Marine Corps is to be successful, leadership must be supportive of the MCMP, thus embracing and enforcing the concept.

RECOMMENDATION 1

The opportunity to choose an assigned mentor seemed to be a desire among the survey participants. This would help elevate the judgments of the MCMP from feeling like such a formal process. If a Marine feels he or she can relate to one mentor instead of another, why not let that Marine choose his or her desired mentor, assuming the mentor is willing and capable? The bottom line is that effective mentoring is needed for all Marines, no matter where they receive it. Many participants felt that their boss or Reporting Senior (RS) should not be their assigned mentor. As stated in *MCO 1500.58*   "Under the MCMP, your immediate supervisor will be your mentor and the Marines that report to you will be your Marine mentees (Hagee, 2006). A lot of things could go wrong in this mentoring arrangement. Professional and personal issues need to stay separated, unless the mentor is open-minded. But it is human nature to judge people differently because of how the mentor views things and as a result of personal mistakes the mentee might have made. This is the often stated as the reason why protégés have problems opening up to their assigned mentor (be it right or wrong). Leading Marines can be tough job. If a

Marine's boss, in his capacity as the MCMP mentor, feels that his mentee cannot address his personal issues, he may also feel that the mentee cannot lead other Marines in a professional capacity. The result is an ineffective mentoring relationship. Approximately 30% of participants divulged that they do not have an assigned mentor. This relatively high percentage of participants without a mentor suggests that it is important to have a different type of assignment process for the MCMP to be effective. Being able to choose a mentor could eliminate the perception of such a formal atmosphere. Everyone understands that a program and structure need to be somewhat followed but feeling they can relate to their mentors and being able to choose whom the participants rely on for advice could help the MCMP succeed.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Time must be set aside for the MCMP to be successful. The data suggested that if the participants were allotted time to perform the mentoring sessions, then formal mentoring might be initiated more often. The MCMP is a Commanding General's Inspection item, and that is the only time anyone truly cares about it. If binders and four different print-out sheets are needed to document the mentoring that occurs on a continued and daily basis, then there is a need to change something. The MCMP is good in its intentions, but there is simply not enough time in the day with the other competing requirements to fully execute it as it is currently designed. Many participants in the survey suggested if anyone is actually following the MCMP to the letter, then I would speculate that it is being "pencil-whipped." If a Marine unit actually allots time for the MCMP (perhaps the same amount as is given to physical fitness), then mentoring sessions might become the norm and could even become effective and satisfactory.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Everyone, especially the leadership, must be held accountable for ensuring the MCMP is a success. Almost a quarter of the survey participants either did not have a MCMP mentor or have not had a MCMP mentor in the past. Over one-fifth of the respondents admitted to not reading the MCMP policy. Accountability that the leaders

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are taking their mentoring seriously must be required of all Marine Corps units. Positive actions could result from genuine and concerned guidance that a dedicated mentor could give to their mentee. Mentoring workshops need to be worked into leadership meetings, and recommendations on how to improve the program should be brainstormed to fit each unit. If the former Marine Commandant General Hagee felt an MCMP was needed and issued an order, then every Marine should take the program seriously.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Another problem and issue that came to light was the MCMP is too rigid, cumbersome, and tedious. The following was one of the comments about the difficulty of following the MCMP *Guidebook*:

> Remove the Common Combat Skills Checklist & Combat Readiness Sheets. Also a better explanation on what is required in the mentoring folders is a must. A clear explanation on how to utilize the month mentorship question checklist, monthly mentoring log, honor, courage, commitment, monthly class' records, and the mentor training logs would be wonderful. There are just too many checklists and logs to maintain a record for the things.

If any of these checklists and logs is actually beneficial, a standardization of the mentee folder is a must. There is a need to cut some of the redundant forms such as the mentee log book and mentorship checklist. A standard mentor/mentee session sheet should be developed that can be used to effectively record the session. A mentor/mentee website (user friendly) could be beneficial by providing a step-by-step process on the utilization of the MCMP. The website could be tailored to differing individual mentoring needs., A dedicated mentoring website for the Marine Corps could prove to save time as well as improve unit cohesion and overall morale.

CONCLUSION

Senior leaders and junior mentors, especially during IG inspections, require their subordinates to participate in mentoring, yet may fail to conduct mentoring sessions themselves. Leading by example is a must if the MCMP is to be successful. If a young Staff Sergeant (SSgt) or Gunnery Sergeant (GySgt) is never mentored in a formal manner

by his or her Lieutenant (Lt) or Captain (Capt), why would they mentor their subordinates? Leaders must hold themselves accountable for implementing the MCMP if it is to succeed. There are good leaders and bad leaders, those that decide to help their assigned and unassigned Marines and those who do not. Mentoring is an essential component of good leadership.

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VI.   CONCLUSION

A.   FINAL THOUGHTS

This research described and assessed the MCMP. The MCMP is meant to help shape future leaders, increase unit cohesion, reinforce solidarity, foster relationships of genuine concern, and better prepare Marines to handle the increased challenges of today's operational climate. The research documented the motivation, goals, and implementation plan of the program and assessed the extent to which the actual implementation is consistent with the plan. It examined how extensively the program is used and also examined mentors' and protégés' assessments of the program. The data were used to compare the MCMP with best practices from the academic literature on mentoring to make recommendations for improving any identified shortcomings. This chapter briefly points out what I set out to do, how I did it, and what I found. I finish with recommendations for further research.

The research identifies advantages and disadvantages of the MCMP, compared with the best practices from the academic literature. This helped provide insight on the efficacy of the policy-driven program. This study provided an assessment of the implementation and operation of the MCMP and made recommendations for improvements to influence esprit de corps in a positive manner. The research findings may offer the Marine Corps a clearer understanding of those personality and background variables between the mentor and mentee that need to be addressed to ensure a successful mentoring program. The main objective of the research was to assess the extent to which the MCMP is perceived to meet its stated goals. This research accomplished the following:

a.   documented the objectives of the MCMP and assessed the planned against the actual implementation,

b.   examined the extent to which the program is used in terms of frequency and type of mentoring, and

c. assessed Marines' perceptions of the effectiveness of the directed MCMP.

Anonymous responses to an electronic survey were collected from Marines officers from the (NPS), as well as Marine Corps unit ranks stationed in the fleet. The draft survey was reviewed and approved by selected NPS professors, as well as vetted for effectiveness by several NPS students (who have experienced the MCMP firsthand) to ensure the survey's effectiveness and obtain clarification in order to receive creditable and useful feedback. This survey was designed to explore the extent to which the implementation of the MCMP is consistent with the original plan. The 305 responses received from the mentoring survey yielded enough data to gauge the problems and concerns with the MCMP, which helped provide insight for recommendations to fix the discrepancies.

There were some notable findings worth mentioning. Approximately 39% of survey participants either agreed or strongly agreed that the MCMP is effective in a positive way, compared to 64% who viewed an unassigned mentoring concept in a positive manner. An average of 24.4% were not aware they had an MCMP mentor and also believed that they had not had an assigned mentor in the past. Approximately 22% have not read the MCMP policy. Approximately 29% of the respondents answered either "somewhat" or "not at all" in response to the question "To what degree do you understand the program?" Furthermore, 15.7% of participants indicated that they had never had scheduled or unscheduled MCMP sessions. Roughly 53% of participants did not feel their MCMP mentor provided constructive psychosocial support. Approximately 80% of respondents preferred to seek mentoring from someone other than their supervisor, who is typically the MCMP assigned mentor. When comparing the frequency of using their assigned MCMP mentor and an unassigned mentor, approximately 60% of respondents more frequently used their unassigned mentor, versus only 40% who sought guidance from their MCMP mentor. Finally, 61% of respondents felt that the MCMP is not beneficial, satisfying, or valuable, with some even indicating that the program is a "waste of time." My analysis of the data leads to my conclusion that MCMP procedures must change if the program is to achieve its objectives.

The MCMP concept has great potential, but the program must be reformed and initiated in a different process in order for every Marine to buy into the usefulness of the program. In other words, it needs to show its worth so leaders would to actually take the time to follow the guidelines. I would compare the current implementation to the problem of a beautiful $300,000 dollar car that has no engine. No matter how pretty it looks, the car will never run without an investment of time and dedication to building the engine. The literature suggests that the MCMP is a good idea and I know (from my own personal experience) Marines who receive informal mentoring are typically the ones who stand out among the rest while the others seem to go through their time in the Marine Corps with little guidance. Addressing this problem is why the MCMP was initiated also why it deserves a better implementation.

There are a few recommendations that would help make the MCMP a useful mentoring tool. The opportunity to choose an assigned mentor seemed to be a desire among the participants and the value of choosing a mentor is supported by the literature.. Obviously, implementing such a change might lead into other issues, but the protégés must feel like they have a vested say in who mentors them. The survey responses and literature suggest that being able to choose a mentor (maybe not in the chain of command) might make mentees feel more open to sharing problems and seeking advice, before a Marine makes a mistake which could cause irrevocable damage.

Another recommendation is to give the mentor and mentee time to meet. Time factors were mentioned frequently in the survey. Most Marines would not complain about taking a small break from the hectic operation tempo that Marines are exposed to daily. Leadership must be held accountable from the top down for enforcing the MCMP. Setting the guidelines and leading by example will do wonders for the MCMP. If a Marine sees that his or her leaders are taking something to heart, the junior Marine will be much more likely to follow suit, even with the MCMP.

Another complaint was that the MCMP was just too rigid, cumbersome, and tedious. There is a good reason for this. Every mentor–mentee relationship is different, and requirements may also vary. When there is a lot of paperwork, the program tends to

have a negative connotation. The large amounts of paperwork make it seem as if it is only a requirement, (this impedes the development of the mentor/mentee relationship) which gives everyone a negative connotation of the program. Minimal paperwork specially tailored to the Marine's needs should be the major focus. Automation is absolutely necessary given the high tempo of the Marine Corps' current operating environment. This would help minimize the atmosphere of negative counseling, make the Marine feel less on the defensive, and help make the overall experience more enjoyable by simplifying the implementation by a computer friendly mentoring program.

This study provided an assessment of the implementation and operation of the MCMP and made recommendations for improvements to influence esprit de corps in a positive manner. The research findings may offer the Marine Corps a clearer understanding of those personality and background variables between the mentor and mentee that need to be addressed to ensure a successful mentoring experience. The study will make the Marine Corps aware of problems with the MCMP that must be addressed if the program is to meet its objectives. The study was conducted on a small sample of approximately 305 respondents in a Marine Corps fleet unit who chose to participate in a survey that assessed their attitudes towards the MCMP. However, the results are of value to any in leadership seeking to understand or improve the MCMP. The guidelines of the MCMP clearly states that all Marines will have a mentor. Thus, anyone who has read the MCMP order and Guidebook (2006) should know that each Marine should have an assigned mentor, whether he or she wants one (MCO 1500.58, 2006). Despite this,, approximately one-quarter of the participants said they do not have an assigned MCMP mentor and have not had one in the past. I found this a bit disconcerting, as would, I hope, all Marine leaders. I have not seen any other studies that focused directly on the MCMP and trust that this research (although limited to only one Marine Corps unit) will contribute to the betterment of the MCMP by filling knowledge gaps and illuminating discrepancies between the planned and actual implementation and use of the program. With reformed approaches and thoughtful guidance on implementing the MCMP, the

program could help preserve and care for the force, support readiness, and develop Marines to their full potential as directed in MCO 1500.58.

B.   LIMITATIONS   AND   RECOMMENDATIONS   FOR   FURTHER RESEARCH

The mentoring study surveyed active duty personnel located at one Marine Corps fleet unit, and responses may have been influence by the setting in which the survey was conducted. Additional studies could select a variety of units (air, ground, and support elements) to get a better sense of underlying issues and trends of the MCMP. In addition, all the participants were active duty Marine personnel, and the results may be different for reserve Marines. These limitations can be addressed with further research and analysis by expanding the participation of the mentoring survey within the Marine Corps.

LIMITATIONS

There are several limitations of this research. First, there are different definitions of mentoring, which may have influenced or confused some respondents. Deeper insight on mentoring is normally found in research where information and data are obtained thorough in-depth interviews rather than surveys. Merrian (1983)) suggests that individuals answer differently to consultations than they do to surveys, and their answers vary, contingent on how precisely the term *mentor* is defined and their own personal understanding of what mentorship is to them. To diminish this effect, this study uses a definition of *mentorship* from NAVMC Directive 1500.58, under the subject of the MCMP Guidebook. The guidebook defines a *mentor* and describes the spectrum of a mentor–mentee relationship. A mentor is defined as a "wise adviser, teacher, and guardian" (NAVMC DIR 1500.58, 2006, p. 5). This is the definition of mentoring participants were asked consider when completing the survey. The second limitation of this research is that it is focused on a small number of participants from one Marine Fleet unit. A third limitations derives from the nature of the data. Limitations are intrinsic in self-reported evaluations. I did not collect actual time-logs of mentor meetings or records of meetings but asked all participants to be truthful in their questionnaire responses. The

research collected data on Marines' perceptions of the program and did not collect actual performance data. This study was based on a self-reported survey and should be considered exploratory because the findings assess participants' views and attitudes. Although this has value in that it displays a genuine view of shared frustrations with the MCMP, it also poses some limitations due to the lack of data to verify the analysis. This research can't make claims about the influence of the MCMP on performance outcomes, but it does give a collection of perceived problems with the actual implementation of the MCMP.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Future studies without the above limitations should be conducted in order to ensure the Marine Corps receives the most credible analysis of MCMP implementation. Having a formal mentoring relationship that yields positive results should be a high priority for increasing productivity and should be encouraged for leaders in the Marine Corps. In the pursuit of increasing productivity, many organizations utilize formal mentoring programs in the hopes of improving their employees' job comprehension, helping them to master skills, and providing a dedicated mentor and guidance for any situation that could affect mentees' performance. The Marine Corps is no exception, but approximately 25% of survey respondents either do not feel they are getting the mentoring that was mandated or are unaware that they have an assigned a mentor. To achieve the full potential of mentoring, the Marine Corps should evaluate and transform, the MCMP to make it a workable tool that benefits the Marine Corps as a whole. The following are possible topics for studies that could further this objective:

- **Is the MCMP more effective in some units?**

The Marine Corps includes different MOSs, different units, different locations, and different leadership. A follow-up study may analyze several different units (air, ground, and support elements) in order to assess whether perceptions of the MCMP are consistent with those found in this study. The opportunity to compare units of the air,

ground, and support spectrums as well as stateside and overseas units could narrow the focus on possible disconnects in the program. One question to consider is whether various units simply enforce the program or tailor it to the work environment and needs of their Marines.

- **Assessing the MCMP: Does planned match actual use and is the program perceived to be effective?**

An extension of my research on the best method of mentoring for the Marine Corps would be to conduct one-on-one interviews with Marine mentors and mentees in order to assess program intent and actual implementation.

- **Do underlying factors increase or decrease the effectiveness of the MCMP?**

This study could analyze the success or failures of the MCMP usage in terms of factors such as gender, race, or religious differences that could exert either negative or positive influence on the program.

C.   BENEFITS OF THE STUDY

This study provides an assessment of the implementation and operation of the MCMP and makes recommendations for improvements to influence esprit de corps in a positive manner. The research findings may offer the Marine Corps a clearer understanding of those personality and background variables between the mentor and mentee that need to be addressed to ensure a successful mentoring program.

D.   CLOSING STATEMENTS

The intent of this research project is not to point fingers or disgrace the tireless efforts of Marine leadership who mentor day in and day out. My goal was to explore the effectiveness of the MCMP in order to improve it. The MCMP is meant to help shape future leaders, increase unit cohesion, reinforce solidarity, foster relationships of genuine concern, and better prepare Marines to handle the increased challenges of today's

operational climate (MCO 1500.58). These are important goals. I order to achieve them, I find that aspects of the program should be reformed. With that said, the first step to fixing a problem is to identify it. As shown in this research, there are positive aspects of the MCMP. However, I would do no service by simply pointing out these positive aspects. With understandable and enforceable guidance, built-in plasticity, mechanization, and buy-in from junior commissioned officers and staff noncommissioned officers, the mentoring program will be successful. If, however, the MCMP is not implemented and utilized in a manner that is consistent with the goals of the program, the majority of the Marines (those that do not fall under the category of promising Marine or troubled Marine) may go through their careers with little to no mentoring.

APPENDIX A: MARINE CORPS MENTORING PROGRAM SURVEY

Introduction and Consent to Participate

You are invited to participate in a research study entitled Assessing the Marine Corps Mentorship Program: Planned vs. actual use and perceived effectiveness. The purpose of the research is to assess how extensively the program is used and examine mentors' and protégés' assessments of the program. Data from this survey will be used to compare the MCMP with best practices from the academic literature on mentoring to make recommendations for improvements.

Procedures. You will be provided a link to an electronic survey. A survey will be provided to you to fill out anonymously and freely. Requirements for the study, including:
- An emphasis on the MCMP and its' current utilization.
- the expected time period could be approximately 20 minutes depending on how much you would want to elaborate on each question.
- Approximately 50 participants will be asked to conduct the survey.
- No compensation, but a way to speak out on the advantages and disadvantages of the MCMP.

Location. The survey will take place electronically and data will be analyzed at the Naval Postgraduate School.

Voluntary Nature of the Study. Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. If you choose to participate you can change your mind at any time and withdraw from the study. You will not be penalized in any way or lose any benefits to which you would otherwise be entitled if you choose not to participate in this study or to withdraw.

Potential Risks and Discomforts. There are no potential risks foreseen, risks resulting from participating in this study.

Anticipated Benefits. There are no anticipated benefits from participating in this study. You will not directly benefit from your participation in this research.

Confidentiality & Privacy Act. Any information that is obtained during this study will be kept confidential to the full extent permitted by law. All efforts, within reason, will be made to keep your personal information in your research record confidential but total confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. The data will be stored electronically for research analysis only. No one outside the research team consisting of the student and advisors will have access to the data.

Points of Contact. If you have any questions or comments about the research, or you experience an injury or have questions about any discomforts that you experience while taking part in this study please contact the Principal Investigator, DR. Kathryn Aten (831) 656-3407 kjaten@nps.edu. Questions about your rights as a research subject or any other concerns may be addressed to the Navy Postgraduate School IRB Chair, Dr. Larry Shattuck, (831)656-2473, lgshattu@nps.edu.

*1. Please indicate whether you would like to participate in the anonymous survey. If you consent to participate (check "yes" below), you will be given access to the survey and further instructions.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Thank you for agreeing to participate!

The answers to this survey will be used for an MBA project at the Naval Postgraduate School. This survey is designed to explore the extent to which the implementation of the Marine Corps Mentoring Program is consistent with the plan emplaced. The study will examine how and how extensively the program is used and how mentors' and protégés' assess the program. This data will be used to compare the MCMP with best practices from the academic literature on mentoring to make recommendations for improving any identified shortcomings. If you have questions at any time about the survey or the procedures, you may contact the email address dlrausch@nps.edu.

The survey is divided into 3 sections: Section 1—Demographic Information, Section 2—How you are mentored, Section 3—How you mentor others, and Section 4—Your assessment of the Marine Corps Mentoring program. The time required will depend on the length of your answers but I anticipate that it will take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete the survey.

Thank you very much for your time and support, and I ask that you be truthful and put some thought into your answers. Your responses will be completely anonymous.

Section 1-Demographic Information

*2. What is your pay grade/rank?

- ○ E1-E3
- ○ E4-E5
- ○ E6-E9
- ○ O1-O3
- ○ O4-O6

*3. How long have you been at your present command?

- ○ Less than a year
- ○ 1 year
- ○ 2 years
- ○ 3 years
- ○ More than 3 years

*4. Does your billet require that you mentor Marines?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

*5. Are you aware that the Marine Corps has a directed mentoring program?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

*6. Have you read the policy describing the program?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

*7. How well do you understand the overall objectives of the Marine Corps Mentoring Program (MCMP) and what is expected of you according to the program?

- ☐ a) not at all
- ☐ b) a little
- ☐ c) somewhat
- ☐ d) fairly well
- ☐ e) completely

*8. Do you currently have an assigned MCMP mentor?

○ Yes

○ No

*9. Have you had an assigned MCMP mentor in the past?

○ Yes

○ No

Section 2a—How are you mentored by your assigned MCMP mentor?

In this portion of the survey, I am interested in your experience being mentored by your MCMP assigned mentor. Please consider your current assigned, mentor if possible or most recent MCMP assigned mentor, if you do not have one now.

According to NAVMC Directive 1500.58, a mentoring session encompasses all aspects of the Marine, and not just their performance. Mentoring meetings should not be punitive in nature, but guidance based. Mentoring sessions should occur at least monthly or when any of the following situations take place: preparing for or returning from deployment, major life changing events (birth, death, marriage, divorce, etc.), intense combat, preparing to make retention/EAS decision. During mentoring meeting the mentor should:

• State the mission of the program and the Marine mentee's role
• Review goals and action plan, discuss progress on any issues previously discussed
• Review Marine mentee strengths/improvement areas identified in previous HCC assessment
• Identify roadblocks and actions to overcome, modify or establish new goals as necessary
• Summarize mentoring session and set date/time for next session

*10. With the above in mind: How often do you formally meet (meetings which are scheduled in advance for the purpose of mentoring) with your assigned MCMP mentor for mentoring?

☐ a) daily

☐ b) weekly

☐ c) monthly

☐ d) every few months

☐ e) once a year

☐ g) less than once a year

☐ f) never

*11. Approximately, how long do your scheduled MCMP sessions typically last?

☐ a) 10 minutes or less

☐ b) More than 10 minutes but less than 30 minutes

☐ c) At least 30 minutes but less than 1 hour

☐ d) 1 hour

☐ e) More than 1 hour

☐ f) Do not have MCMP sessions

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12. How often do you receive mentoring guidance and advice from your assigned MCMP mentor outside of scheduled mentoring sessions?

☐ a) daily

☐ b) weekly

☐ c) monthly

☐ d) every few months

☐ e) once a year

☐ f) less than once a year

☐ g) never

13. How long do these un-scheduled mentoring opportunities typically last?

☐ a) 10 minutes or less

☐ b) More than 10 minutes but less than 30 minutes

☐ c) At least 30 minutes but less than 1 hour

☐ d) 1 hour

☐ e) More than 1 hour

☐ f) Do no have un-scheduled mentoring

For the following questions, please continue to consider your assigned MCMP mentor and use the scale below.

Please indicate the extent to which you AGREE or DISAGREE with the following statements:
1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree

14. My MCMP mentor takes a personal interest in my career.

Stongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

_____

15. My MCMP mentor helps me coordinate my professional goals.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

_____

16. My MCMP mentor has devoted special time and consideration to my career.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

_____

17. I share personal problems with my MCMP mentor.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

_____

18. I exchange confidences with my MCMP mentor.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Stongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

_____

19. I consider my MCMP mentor to be a friend.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

_____

20. My MCMP mentor is someone I am satisfied with.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

[   ]

21. My MCMP mentor has been effective in his/her role.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

[   ]

22. My MCMP mentor fails to meet my needs.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Srongly agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

[   ]

23. My MCMP mentor disappoints me.

Stongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

[   ]

24. The MCMP is effective.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Disagree
○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

[   ]

25. The MCMP allows me access to mentors who otherwise would have been unattainable.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

[   ]

26. I am satisfied with the MCMP.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Netiher agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

[   ]

27. The MCMP smoothed the way for me to get a mentor.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

[   ]

28. The MCMP is a waste of time.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

[   ]

29. The MCMP is a valuable program.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

[   ]

30. The MCMP has been very beneficial to me.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

[   ]

31. What topics (if any) do you avoid discussing with your mentor? Please describe the topic as specifically as possible and explain why (i.e. I do not discuss topics such as_____with my assigned mentor because_____.)

[   ]

＊32. What changes should be made to improve the Marine Corps Mentoring Program? (for mentors and mentees)

[   ]

Section 2b—How are you mentored outside of the MCMP?

In this section of the survey, I am interested in your experience being mentored by an unassigned mentor (individuals who are not your MCMP assigned mentor). Please consider the person you seek for mentoring and advice, other than your MCMP assigned mentor.

33. What is the role of the unassigned mentor to whom you most frequently go for advice?

- ○ a) Former supervisor
- ○ b) Peer level co-worker
- ○ c) Senior co-worker, not a supervisor
- ○ d) Personal friend (not a co-worker)
- ○ e) Other, please describe
- ○ f) Do not have a unassigned mentor

Other (please specify)

[   ]

34. Indicate the frequency with which you go to your unassigned mentor vs. your MCMP assigned mentor for mentoring.

- ○ a) 100% unassigned mentor
- ○ b) 80% unassigned mentor 20% MCMP mentor
- ○ c) 60% unassigned mentor 40% MCMP mentor
- ○ d) 20% unassigned I mentor 80% MCMP mentor
- ○ e) 100% MCMP mentor
- ○ f) N/A

Other (please specify)

[   ]

35. What topics (if any) do you avoid discussing with your unassigned mentor? Please describe the topic as specifically as possible and explain why (i.e. I do not discuss topics such as_____with my assigned mentor because_____.)

[   ]

For the following questions, please continue to consider your unassigned mentor and use the scale below.

Please indicate the extent to which you AGREE or DISAGREE with the following statements:
1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree

36. My unassigned mentor takes a personal interest in my career.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

37. My unassigned mentor helps me coordinate my professional goals.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

38. My unassigned mentor has devoted special time and consideration to my career.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

39. I share personal problems with my unassigned mentor.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

40. I exchange confidences with my unassigned mentor.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

41. I consider my unassigned mentor to be a friend.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

42. My unassigned mentor is someone I am satisfied with.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

43. My unassigned mentor has been effective in his/her role.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

44. My unassigned mentor fails to meet my needs.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

45. My unassigned mentor disappoints me.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

46. The unassigned mentor is effective.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

47. The unassigned mentor allows me access to mentors who otherwise would have been unattainable.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

48. I am satisfied with the mentoring I receive from my unassigned mentor.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

[   ]

49. The mentoring I receive from my unassigned mentor is a waste of time.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

[   ]

50. The mentoring I receive from my unassigned mentor is valuable.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

[   ]

51. The mentoring I receive from my unassigned mentor has been very beneficial to me.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

[   ]

Section 3a—How do you mentor MCMP assigned mentees?

Please tell me about your experience mentoring assigned, MCMP mentees. Consider your current, assigned mentees.

52. How many Marines are you required to mentor under the MCMP guidance?

○ 1

○ 2

○ 3

○ 4

○ 5

○ 6 or more

○ N/A

Other (please specify)

[   ]

53. How often do you formally meet with your assigned MCMP mentees in scheduled mentoring sessions?

○ a) daily

○ b) Weekly

○ c) monthly

○ d) every few months

○ e) once a year

○ f) less than once a year

○ g) never

54. How often do you give mentoring guidance and advice to your assigned MCMP mentees outside of scheduled mentoring sessions?

○ a) daily

○ b) weekly

○ c) monthly

○ d) every few months

○ e) once a year

○ f) less than once a year

○ g) never

Other (please specify)

[   ]

55. How long do these un-scheduled mentoring instances typically last?

○ a) 10 minutes or less

○ b) More than 10 minutes but less than 30 minutes

○ c) At least 30 minutes but less than 1 hour

○ d) 1 hour

○ e) More than 1 hour

Other (please specify)

[   ]

✱ 56. Do you have the personal skills you need to positively mentor your assigned MCMP mentees? Please answer yes or no and explain.

[   ]

Section 3b—How do you mentor unassigned mentees?

Please tell me about your experience mentoring Marines who are not assigned to you through the MCMP.

57. How many unassigned Marines do you mentor? (Marines who are not assigned to you according to the MCMP)

○ 1

○ 2

○ 3

○ 4

○ 5

○ 6 or more

○ N/A

Other (please specify)

[   ]

58. How often do you meet in scheduled meetings to give mentoring advice and guidance to mentees who are not assigned to you?

○ a. daily

○ b) Weekly

○ c) monthly

○ d) every few months

○ e) once a year

○ f) less than once a year

○ g) never

Other (please specify)

[   ]

59. How often do you give mentoring guidance and advice to mentees who are not assigned to you in unscheduled meetings? (You or they stop by or meet socially and you take the opportunity to give mentoring advice or guidance).

- ○ a) daily
- ○ b) weekly
- ○ c) monthly
- ○ d) every few months
- ○ e) once a year
- ○ f) less than once a year
- ○ g) never

Other (please specify)

[   ]

60. How long do these un-scheduled mentoring instances with unassigned mentees typically last?

- ○ a) 10 minutes or less
- ○ b) More than 10 minutes but less than 30 minutes
- ○ c) At least 30 minutes but less than 1 hour
- ○ d) 1 hour
- ○ e) More than 1 hour
- ○ f) Do not have un-scheduled mentoring sessions

Other (please specify)

[   ]

∗61. Do you have the personal skills you need to positively mentor your unassigned mentees? Please answer yes or no and explain.

[   ]

62. What other thoughts (if any) about the MCMP or mentoring and receiving mentoring in the Marine Corps would you like to share? This is the last question. Thank you for your participation.

[   ]

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APPENDIX B: MENTORING SURVEY SHORT ANSWER SUMMARIES

1.   What topics (if any) do you avoid discussing with your mentor? Please describe the topic as specifically as possible and explain why (i.e. I do not discuss topics such as_____with my assigned mentor because_____.)

I don't discuss personal topics, because I'm a private person and keep things to myself unless absolutely necessary.
I do not discuss topic such as personal issues with my assigned mentor because most mentors in my opinion aren't there for you they are there for whoever told them who they're assigned too.
Family issues
As of right now, no topic has been avoided.
I don't discuss personal or off duty problems with my mentor because I don't trust my mentor enough.
I avoid telling my Mentor anything personal, because first of all the Marine Corps does not care unless there is a problem that will inhibit the mission. We as an institution are too busy to worry about all the mission requirements things day to day to really take time out for mentorship as the program thinks it should happen.
At a personal level, I have never connected to my Mentors at a personal level. They never really ask and when they do, it sounds robotic.
When I was a mentor, the big topics of discussion were finance and marriage/relationship. Young Marines have very little knowledge of financial matters, budgeting, what a marriage is meant for, the pro/cons of marriage, etc.
None. I can talk about anything with my Mentor
I avoid discussing negative issues with my mentor because I try to keep the sessions positive.
I do not describe personal family relationship issues with my mentor. If I am having relationship problems I will not share that fact. If the issue begins to have an effect on my professional life I may fill him in on the generalities.
I do not discuss topics such as meritorious promotions with my assigned mentor because he has told me on multiple occasions that he feels that Meritorious Promotions are a joke and he does not have respect for Marines who have been promoted that way. He also knows I was Meritoriously Promoted to Cpl with-in the first year of my Marine Corps Career.
Nothing specific.
I am free to talk about anything
I do not discuss very personal issues with anyone in the shop, because I feel they'll make it worse.

Personal situations and problems. In my experience, most Marines view any problem as a weakness. I have not received support from mentors in the past.
I do not discuss topics such as my romantic life with my mentor because it is irrelevant.
I really don't have a mentor. I have a supervisor who I will speak with if I have something that comes up.
I talk to my mentors as little as possible about any problems unless I have no other choice.
Personal issues because it is personal
Family Stuff
I have not been formally assigned a mentor.
I am fully able to discuss anything with mentor, during unscheduled meetings.
marital issues - I can handle it at my level
I do not discuss topics such as personal life with my assigned mentor because I have only been here few a months now and I usually do not like bring up personal problems yet.
I do not discuss topics such as relationships with my assigned mentor because it shows
family
Family, because I feel like it's important to talk to the right person about certain issues. So, he may be affective in curtain areas and lacking in others or I can have a close relationship with my family.
Future goals out of the Marine Corps because my mentor keeps trying to convince me to stay in.
personal because it personal
I do not discuss any topics.
I discuss everything with my number
I do not discuss personal problems because they are usually short time problems but recurring as well and because I'm not comfortable sharing my problems as I feel they may think I'm trying to make some kind of excuse
Any topic which does not affect the mission because that is all that matters.
personal topics because I do not want to mix my work with personal life
Personal problems because I don't have enough confidence on letting him know my personal problems.
I do not discuss personal topics with my direct assigned mentor because I do not fully trust that he will use the information in my best interests.
Personal Problems with family
I do not talk about the subject of my personal business with my assigned mentor because I do not like talking about my personal life.
Topics that isn't pertinent to my career or work.
I do not discuss topics such as religion because we have different beliefs
I do not discuss any personal issues unless I absolutely need assistance with them.
home life/ this is the first time they have been away from family

I do not discuss topics such as my infectious herpes illness that I'm shy about, because it is personal.
I do not discuss personal life because it does not concern the person I am telling
I discuss all problems with my mentor
Marital issues because I can usually take care of them myself and I have been Married significantly longer than most people around me.
It's specific to the individual. Each individual has specific issues that will put up their guard and make any furthering mentoring during that session practically impossible. The only way to know what topics to avoid is to know the individual.
I am openly with my mentor in any topics.
As a Sgt I am not going to talk about problems as it makes me look weak. Sgts don't have time to have their own problems, as I deal with all the problems of every rank below me.
I personally share almost everything with my mentor. He goes through the same thing I am and he helps me get through my problems.
Most Marines do not discuss personal topics with their assigned mentor because they don't trust the person that is assigned to be their mentor.
n/a everything is on the table
Personal problems because I am rather independent.
We talk about my personal issues, it helps me deal with my personal problems and he gives me advice as to keep my mind busy while I'm deployed.
Career goal progress
I don't meet with my mentor.
Personal preferences.
I do not discuss topics such as personal problems with my assigned mentor because I believe it is best to solve these issues on my own. However, I do bring up some issues just to ask for help on how to deal with them.
Personal
personal issues because they will talk to other people about
personal problem confidentiality
You can't choose you mentor. I don't agree with being assigned to someone as a SNCO. If that person has a grudge professionally/personally then I don't see a need in discussing career or personal things with them.
I do not discuss a wide range of topics with my mentor because I don't need any mentorship on them.
I do not discuss topics such as finances with my assigned mentor because I do not feel comfortable enough to discuss them
Other NCO If I have a problem I will approach them
FAMILY ISSUES

I do not discuss topics such as personal issues with my assigned mentor because I not have enough trust in them and I do not with comfortable addressing my situations with them.
I try not to discuss much with my mentor because the only person that can solve my problems is me. If I feel the need to welcome in a third party, then I will openly discuss anything.
personal problems
no mentor
I do not discuss topics such as life after the Military with my assigned mentor because Its something they wouldn't know about they are younger than me.
everything
work and personal life
I discuss all issues with my mentor.
I do not discuss topics of my personal home situation because I have it under control.
I do not discuss topics such as personal problems with my assigned mentor because they would not be appropriate and could cause disruption in the work environment
I do not discuss topics regarding the minutiae of my personal life, because they are of no consequence to the mentor/mentee relationship.
off duty personal issues/it's personal and private
Family issues, financial issues (if ever any), really anything that would make me look sideways.
I do not discuss personal issues with my mentor because I do not feel it in necessary.
job progression because the topic falls on deaf ears
Personal issues because they are often hard to discuss with anyone.
I had not have a mentor; however, Marines tend not to discuss personal issues as their superiors tend to see it as a weakness and a compare it to performance when the two are not related. It may affect it but not related.
Usually at this level, Field Grade, your mentor is your boss (CO or XO), so there are great deals of things that are not personally shared. I was never really assigned a Mentor, but that is the person that I look to for advice and/or career assistance. Personal type problems might be discussed with your senior SNCO, in my case (1stSgt), as we were very close to each other and were around each around the clock. Other people that we might talk to are Officers that are of the same grade that we have also become close to.
I need to emphasize that I have never been assigned a Mentor, but I frequently turn to those that I trust and respect for guidance and advice. The things I talk about with my respected advisors are future Career assignments, pay and entitlements, education opportunities, fitness goals, family issues, etc... This works for me, but I choose my mentors and although unofficial it has been effective.
Marital problems because it does not affect work, it is no one else's business, and it is not severe enough to result in discussion.
Personal issues that may lead my mentor (AKA boss) to think I cannot take care of my personal issue at home, how can he rely on me to do it a work? Better left unsaid.

2.   What changes should be made to improve the Marine Corps Mentoring Program? (for mentors and mentees)

The marine corps mentoring program is irrelevant in many aspects. As a mentee and only a mentee I see firsthand over and over how assigned mentors are not effective on the count of they look at mentoring as a task. Marine corps always did fine on taking advice from fellow marines and making role models of themselves for others to follow.
Don't know of any changes that need to be made.
Giving the mentors more resources so that they are better equipped and more knowledgeful on how to help their mentees.
A change that I would make to the MCMP is option to change mentor whenever pleased. Can't really take in advice from someone you prefer not to talk to.
E-3 SHOULD BE MENTORES
Mentoring shouldn't be such a formal process. Mentorship occurs with the natural ebb and flow of constant interaction, not necessarily forced interaction.
Counselings should better reflect conduct both good and bad not just bad.
The MCMP serves a purpose for junior Marines and should continue IOT provide Marines an opportunity to excel, fix deficiencies, understand what they are good well and assist in modeling Marines to become leaders.
Marines should be given the time to actually conduct the required mentoring program. We all know that mission comes first, but without the Marines we cannot accomplish the mission.
Get rid of the program

Bring back the counseling system, once a month is too often. One month of knowing someone or seeing their work is enough to make a conclusion on how to train them to better themselves? If that is the case pro/con's should be a monthly evolution, but they aren't because it's trend analysis over a period of time. 3 months is long enough to provide an accurate sampling of everything that goes into being a Marine and most MOS's. Or maybe look into the civilian sector and review a company that has the best development of its employees to promote from within vice having to go outside to hire new people. Look at their programs and see what they do. And if you want accountability of it more than a jacket that can be penwhiped, create a module on MOL that senior leadership can create a jacket for a Marine assign it to a mentor and track whether it's really happening. i.e., see when counselings are being conducted, what is being talked about, and negatives as well. This way you can run a report and see who is lacking and look into the quality of counseling. We ensure the only people who can view more than their own mentee's jacket are ones assigned by the CO in the system because of the need to know; like the Plt Sgt on up in the chain. This will enact real change in our mindset because there is no faking the funk when everyone can see what you are doing at a click of a button. As for the mentee's; allow them the option to choose mentors, but make sure the mentor only has a certain amount based upon percentage of the population they are allowed to mentor for. That way all the LCpls don't overload the one Cpl who is GTG.

More time should be devoted to it in order to make it feasible. A few years ago, we had specific times allotted to us every week to meet with our mentees. Then, it turned to more of a "once a month pencil whip the mentor binder." Now, it is nowhere to be seen in this squadron. No mention of it ever - except when a junior Marine gets in trouble has to go stand in front of the Commanding Officer - then he/she must be accompanied by their mentor.

Remove checklist paperwork and concentrate more on Goal orientation.

Less formal and more personal. When it is required, the mentee feels like it is a obligation of the mentor vise something we do for each other as Marines.

Marines should be held accountable for missing their monthly or quarterly counseling sessions with their mentees (i.e. Page 11's).

Get rid of forced meetings. Mentoring should be continuous.

I would make the MCMP a requirement for E-5 and below and O-1 through O-3 (not O-3E). These are the ranks where the majority of impact will be made.

Get rid of program

Less formal due to the fact that as a mentor a Marine should be able to speak freely and they do have that ability in a mentoring session, but with such classroom like instruction from the handbook it makes the mentee feel they are being talked down to. I have always been a personal person so this did not affect my mentoring style, but for the PFC or LCPL that is supposed to try to relate to a mentor that has no personality or empathy for that Marine I could see where this could hinder the mentee's ability or want to share their problems with that individual.

Marines Should be screened to see if they are fit to be a mentor.

More formal meetings. Say twice a month.

A person should not just be thrown with a mentor by random.

Stop having LCPL's with an extra stripe being mentors
Anything to simplify the program is always good.
The MCMP should place more value on the relationship between mentor and mentee, and mentors need to have more of a caring and vested interest in getting to know their mentees to properly help them with their problems.
Talk less about work
It should be less structured
Discontinue the program.
The mentorship program has caused more unnecessary paperwork than anything. a marine will find the person he or she feels that they are the most comfortable with, regardless of mentorship assignment.
choose your own mentor
Express more feelings
More training conducted on procedures and purpose of program. too many people are clueless
To do away with the program entirely. I can tell you that over my tenure, I haven't ever had a mentor or counseling. I've had effective leaders who were able to guide me to a thus far successful career. If my supervisor has an issue with me, that Marine will let me know.
Need to realize the age gap between mentees and mentors can create problems. A mentor should not be two or plus years younger than a mentee.
Bi-monthly counselings
Time allowance for it to actually be done
It's called leadership. A good leader is involved and mentors his/her Marines. We shouldn't have a program that makes us be leaders.
Mentors should not be forced onto a mentee.
Mandatory corporals course with in the First year of picking up
I believe that a mentee should be able to choose his/her own mentor. As long as it is a sound decision. I myself do not have a truly assigned mentor and the one Marine that is doing it I have lost respect towards his leadership. I still abide by the Marine Corps customs and courtesies however he is never present in the work space and he is allowed to give me input and effect my fitrep.
Mentorship goes hand in hand with leadership. A good leader is already mentoring his or her Marines whether assigned or not. I'm not sure there should be a formal program when mentoring should already occur within the natural chain of leadership.
PROVIDE MORE TRAINING ABOUT THE MCMP PROGRAM
Let the Marines choose their mentors.
Only allowing caring mentors in the program.
The program is good where it is
Mentors need to actually MENTOR as opposed to just paper whipping the work.

Make the system easier to implement. Get a central website where any information needed can be found. Get more involvement from SNCOs.
Allow the mentee the opportunity to choose a mentor, someone their comfortable with, and only if there is none should a mentor be assigned.
I WOUDNT MAKE ANY CHANGES.
There should not be a mentoring program. It makes many Marines feel as if "Here is another tasker that has to be completed monthly and just a check in the box." By making this a mandatory program it takes away the value of authenticity in mentoring a Marine.
The program is a great program for every Marine to know each other.
more mentoring sessions
Option to choose your mentor.
Have truly motivated and knowledgeable people become mentors.
Mentoring other Marines should be allowed to happen within the same ranks.
I like the way the program is now.
I think that it is very good program. I do not see any problems with it.
no changes are necessary I believe the program works and does not need to be changed.
Making personal life slightly more important during the monthly sessions
I don't think much can be done to improve it. Just need more people to follow the program and how its supposed to be.
Less Intrusive and less check in the block paperwork. The MCMP has become more administrative then mentoring.
From what I have seen, the MCMP is essentially ineffective because there is simply not enough time in the day to accomplish the requirements of the "formal" program. I absolutely believe that mentoring does happen and is essential, but under the current construct I think it is not meeting its desired effect. I think it is a valuable program if it could be implemented the way that it was intended, but there are simply too many competing requirements for many assignments/billets/duty stations/etc., to do it right. My only hope is that the informal mentoring is continuing to go on as it has from generation to generation of Marines, previously called leadership and troop welfare and developing subordinates.
make mentoring optional to see what motivated NCO's or Marines step up to the current MCMP standards
Mandatory mentoring sessions
I believe that there should be designated time frames in the month that dictate allotted times for mentoring.
allow for the marines to bond outside of work to develop a cohesion without it being considered fraternization
I don't believe anything is wrong with the program itself, just on an individual basis from mentor to mentor. The program only works if we do what we are supposed to do

The MCMP program is far more complicated than required. It is more of a tool to document and ensure individuals are covered in the event that a Marine screws up. A mentor is supposed to be a trusted guide or counselor by the Merriam-Webster definition. When you put guidelines and create process of how this will be accomplished it defeats the intent of a true mentorship. The program hinders Marines from actually being able to mentor a Junior Marines. You spend more time filling out required paperwork and dealing with risk assessments than actually being able to teach a Marine how to be a Marine. The concept seems to be to ensure that the counselings are happening when needed but the program fails and has become a tool to ensure every little thing about a Marine is documented in the event they do something wrong. You are told to comment on good and bad things but with all the required paperwork that picks apart everything about a Marine, even if you are documenting good things it is in the pretense of being there in the event something goes wrong. Also the topic of "intrusive leadership" that is constantly thrown around nowadays is another way to cover oneself in the event that something bad happens to a Marine. No one really cares what a Marine does unless what they do could impact their Career. The MCMP has become tool to threaten a Marines Career in the event their junior Marines screw up. In short Mentorship cannot be a "PROGRAM." Mentorship has to happen on its own and cannot be forced upon individuals to be truly successful.

the mentees should chose there mentors because they might have someone they fill is a better mentor and that person could help them in their career more than an assigned mentor

the mentee should be able to select who he/she wants as there mentor, without any prejudice or judgment

More surveys should tell.

An actual course on that Marines of a certain rank can take to improve their mentorship skills, and possibly grow from the course themselves.

Personally at work, the operational tempo is extremely high paced while at work. It is often difficult to find a large portion of time that you can take out of your day to spend on anything other than your specific job, and many times when you do find some down time, you want to use it to take a break and relax. To make the MCMP more effective (and I'm not speaking for every MOS, only for mine specifically where I find a shortage of time during my work day) Marines need to take an operational pause and dedicate a specific and reasonable amount of time for these personal and professional development mentoring sessions. An hour is certainly not enough time to effectively look at a Marine (maybe more if the mentor is assigned more than one mentee), determine his strengths, weaknesses, where he can improve, specify goals, etc... This is a multiple hour long endeavor that needs to be afforded an adequate amount of time. Now given that the operational tempo is so high paced, obviously shutting down maintenance for an entire day is not feasible as it would cut into flight/training hours. My suggestion would be that a "port/starboard" type system be implemented at a squadron level where say the last two Fridays of the month are utilized as mentoring days. Duty sections 1 and 3 (port side) would use that second from last Friday as their mentoring day. The last Friday would be duty section 2 and 4. My reasons for spelling out specific times for mentoring sessions simply boils down to this: A majority of Marines (unfortunately) will not take the time to spend on their subordinates unless they are dictated to do so. That starts straight at the top. If the Gunnery Sergeant does not take the time to mentor his Staff Sergeants, then the Staff Sergeant is not going to find time for his Sergeants, so on and so forth. Now, alternatively, some Gunnery Sergeants are excellent mentors and extremely devoted to nurturing and cultivating their Marines. These Gunnery Sergeants will mentor their Staff Sergeants frequently, which in turn will make the Staff Sergeant want to mentor their Sergeants, etc. I have found mentorship to be a very contagious; like a yawn. If you see one person doing it, you're going to want to do it as well.

Marines should be able to select their own mentor. Being assigned a mentor doesn't mean that the Marine trusts that person or is willing to see real guidance from them. Some Marines are better people both professionally and personally than the mentor they are assigned. When this is the case the mentee receives nothing from the program.

No changes. I think it has a decent base. I usually pencil whip the required training and just counsel of what is needed or comes up during the week.

The Marine Corps Mentoring Program would be a great program but it becomes a complete pain when it has to be documented all the time. This program needs to be a complete separate program from counseling and needs to implement like that. The mentors should be there for taking care of the mentee and helping on daily issues. There should be no written or documented parts. That's what we have counsellings for. I believe this program needs an overhaul to fix the muddled program it is to what could be a great help to young and old Marines alike.

There should probably be a scheduled time for actually doing some mentoring. Much like the tech training has a specified time, there is too much going on in the work center at any one time, and the mentoring program doesn't have a high enough priority. Only once everything else gets done does mentoring come up as something to do.

I believe that the program its fine as it is.

more frequent meetings

To be honest I do not know enough about the mentoring program to give input on this question
I like the mentoring program and what it stands for. But the program does not replace bad leaders that just don't care. For many, "getting the mentoring session done" is more important than a true mentoring session where a heart to heart talk takes place. It is another check in the box for the bad leaders, of which there are many. I do agree with the idea, but wish it was actually utilized by Sgts and Cpls more. Many will claim op tempo but they will be bullshitting. They don't truly care or are too busy to care.
The overall program is nothing more than taking care of your Marines. Its yet another requirement that tends to be a paper shuffle rather than Marines just guiding Marines. Get rid of the paper requirement and continue business as usual.
That it actually be used by units
They need to stop being selfish.
I think the marine corps mentoring program can be emphasized more because most marines don't use the program or even know too much about it.
nothing
I don't think there needs to be any changes.
Just because a Marine is in a leadership role does not mean that they are fit to be a mentor. People will choose the person that they want to be mentored by. Telling a Marine that this is the person that is going to mentor you does no good especially if the Marine being chosen to mentor is not respected by his Marines or his peers.
make the marine corps use all the same forms
None
overall, program is good as is.
More Care
There should be more time for the mentors and mentees to have time to talk about topics they may need to be discussed for a certain event that may of happened that week. We don't get much time to talk about the important things because some shops/work centers may have a lot of work to do.
Waste of time all together for me personally
COUNSELLING AND MENTORING ARE ONLY DIFFERENT IN PAPER, A MENTOR SHOULD BE MORE THAN CAPABLE OF COUNSELLING HIS MARINES, I FIND THE PROGRAMS TO BE REDUNDANT OF ONE ANOTHER AND CONFUSING, ONE PROGRAM THAT COVERS ALL BASES WOULD BE MORE EFFECTIVE IN MY OPINION.
Ensure the program is understood by junior Marines, and senior Marines understand it is mandatory.
nothing
It is not a program where you should have nor have need for an assigned mentor. Marines mentor junior Marines because that is a part of our heritage and success.
Give mentors time to actually work with you in bettering yourself.
There is no need to document anything about the program; it is not needed to be effective.

I talk or mentor my marines every day at times we are busy building engines that we don't have to go back and write down exactly what we talked about at times it can be life or work that I mentor him in
Letting mentees have the opportunity to mentor new marines
Shouldn't be mandatory
Have a proper mentor assigned
it should be done away with
mentors: be more active mentees: more active role
Get rid of a lot of the paper work involved. Prior to this was just monthly counselings with your junior Marines. It seems like there is a lot more documentation nowadays compared to ten years ago.
Clearly explain if it does or doesn't take the place of counselings. Also, explain how it's different than basic Marine Corps leadership.
For both, keep the program but do not make it a mandatory timed thing. It should be free to be utilized whenever the case dictates.
help to improve life out of work (SMP, ITT, and other trips) especially for Marines stationed overseas
I think the junior Marines should be able to pick their mentor
allow mentees to choose their mentor within reason. Right now, they are assigned a mentor from their SNCO, with no say about the marine that is in charge of them. What if that marine, is not the best choice for that mentee? Even if it looks bad for that Cpl or Sgt, for not having any mentees.
No changes needed to the program.
Mentors should be proactive in mentoring their mentees; they should know how their mentees are doing whether it's asking the mentee if they are okay or if there is anything they would like to talk about. Showing the mentee that you care will help build the trust between the mentee and you. The mentee should feel comfortable with the mentor.
Less paper more one on one time in and out of work
A more casual approach; less formal and should be on a personal level
THE PROGRAM IS VERY EFFECTIVE
Quit using it as a blaming tool.
Mentoring should be focusing on learning more about the Marine and helping with the everyday problems that may come their way.

Dissolve the program; it is nothing more now than a formal inspectable program that is used to determine who failed when an incident occurs. The Marine Corps already had a counseling program that wasn't effective and so this was developed and it is having the same result. The problem is not the programs developed, it is leadership's role and the application of the program that matters. It all comes down to this: the success or failure of a Marines career is a personal choice based on individual decisions, no program or mentor truly has an impact on influencing change unless the participant takes an active role. No amount of MCOs, directives, or revisions will change that.
I believe that a mentor should not have to be someone within your chain of command. You should be paired up with someone who has similar interests as you, and has achieved the goals that you are striving to accomplish.
Council as you go versus counseling at a certain time.
The MCMP should allow for more autonomy. Tell Marines they must mentor and be mentee; let them formulate the way they want to do it. Two Marines will not effectively mentor others in the same way. Each will have their own route to successfully mentoring. We have already been given the purpose of mentoring and mastery will come in time. Autonomy will produce the best result.
Properly instruct Marines on counseling techniques
More structured assignments that include SNCO experience but also contain more formal information about the subject being discussed.
I do not believe the mentorship program is required and should definitely not be an inspectable program. Mentorship happens on a daily basis. I certainly don't need a binder to remind me that it has occurred.
make sure its fitted to all ranks
Get rid of the mentorship program because it does not work the way it is supposed to work.
I personally don't think that the program is very beneficial.
While this program was conceptualized with the best of intentions, its execution is in dire need of re-evaluation. Marines need to be able to select their mentor from whomever they choose, commands are not allowing this to happen. The current program is "counseling." Mentorship should be something that is on an as needed basis. A mentor is someone whom you emulate, not someone that was assigned to you and gives you an on schedule session to cover some useless point that is written in a mentoring book.
Changes should be getting rid of the program. Marines have a duty to mentor their subordinates, making another program for it only burdens the Marines and depletes resources.
It's so in depth that it makes people not want to do it. it does NOT take all of that to MENTOR a Marine
take it away
The mentorship program book is to direct doesn't open certain topics
Nothing at the moment. most mentors have enough tools at their disposal to take advantage of to further mold and guide junior Marines to both their professional and personal goals
There needs to be a more standard format for ALL mentoring programs and not command

specific.
less formal more man to man talks IT SHOULDNT BE ON A MONTHLY BASIS. IT SHOULD BE HOLD ACCORDINGLY
better opportunities to choose your mentor
not involve personal issues
The mentorship program as a whole has become a check in the box and is never about actually mentoring or being a mentee.
I do not have any improvement suggestions to contribute.
Mentees should actively search for a mentor that can accomplish their goals. Mentors should be able to spend time with their mentees regardless of rank.
Marines have been mentoring since the beginning and now it has become less effective because people are worry about updating mentorship folders and counselings that they have lost track of what mentorship is all about. as Marines we mentor junior troops day in and day out but heaven forbid if I don't document in their mentorship folder
let me pick my mentor and have his or her mentorship evaluated
Less paperwork makes the mentee feel tracked harder to share or talk with mentor.
The official program is a waste of time and needs to go away. All the requirements of the program are next to impossible to meet. The program is nothing more than taking care of our Marines like it's been done for years just now with excessive amounts of paperwork and wasted time.
I think mentors and mentees should be allowed to choose each other. Also don't make it so structured a mentor and mentee should talk once a quarter with periodic checkups not a piece of paper to tell you what to mentor on. Not some checklist to check off every week or month.
stop promoting useless NCOs
I feel that mentees should be allowed to pick there mentor. I tell my mentees that even though I am your mentor on paper go find someone else that you aspire to be like. If that me GREAT if not then so be it.
Informal counselings should hold more weight than they currently do.
I would make the resources for the mentoring program more easily accessible. right not it is difficult to find copies of canceling forms and other items used to benefit and aid the mentoring process.
Mentors should be aware to do it daily
I would ensure Mentors have access to more information concerning their Marines.
less paperwork
More emphasis needs to be put on informal mentoring
Mentorship is an ongoing process that I don't believe can be broken down into monthly/quarterly meetings. It's a definable part of leadership, and should simply be included in day-to-day leadership, instead of trying to 'enforce' being a mentor.
Remove the paperwork to speed the process.
In my own opinion this program is set up well!

Mentor to actually inform their mentees if they are going to change and to keep a clear understanding of whom the mentor is
Remove the Common Combat Skills Checklist & Combat Readiness Sheets. Also a better explanation on what's required in the Folders is a must as well as a clear explanation on how to utilize the Month Mentorship Question Checklist, Monthly Mentoring Log, Honor, Courage, Commitment Monthly Classes Record, and the Mentor Training Log. Too many Checklists and Logs that all maintain a record for the things.
I don't know and I have no opinion.
Standardization. It seems it could be tailored better to the different types of Marines of today.
The MCMP needs to develop a standardized set-up for Mentorship folders. MCMP currently has too many forms to fill out that hold little or no value. A standard monthly mentor sheet should be developed and used for all Marines. The multiple checklists that are in the program are redundant and hold little value to knowing you Mentee. Every command I have been to has a different set-up for mentee folders. The MCMP should focus on getting to know your Marine and keeping standard documentation on your Mentee.
Allow the Marines to pick their own Mentor. There are some Marines who cannot mentor worth a damn. Those mentors just fail the Assigned Marines and these lost Marines are losing out. Those crappy mentors hold be pointed out and noted on their FitReps explaining they do not know how to lead or provide the support these younger Marines need.
Mentoring has been going on before the term Mentor Program was coined it was called counseling and not in a negative way. Counseling can be for a good or bad occasion.
A more affirmative way to determine whether mentoring is being done. Perhaps, establish a Marine Corps Mentorship Program website where tracking and logging of mentorship meetings can be logged, in a secure format.
Allocate more time for mentors and mentees to discuss and have a more general forum of discussion. In order to get people to trust you, you have to make some kind of connection.
The directives should be looked at more as guidelines in the mentoring process, not as specific requirements
get rid of it
Take out all the paperwork requirements....spend more time make the required package than working with your Marine.
More awareness of the program, more requirements for all Marines to participate in the program.
Hold senior leadership accountable. Perhaps, it should be a CGRI item which can be inspected and evaluated. Enforcement is the key.
Inspect every Command..."EVERY" command and ensure that they are enforcing the MCMP. Senior Leadership has to buy into and support the program; otherwise, it will just be pushed off onto the Enlisted Marines to deal with. If the Marines (all ranks) do not know about it, then it is hard to utilize it as a tool, even though, it might be considered a great tool.

If it is going to work it has to be enforced. Right now it is not so I feel that it gets written off as being unimportant.
I generally just don't agree that this program can be effective when it's forced like MCMP is. I believe that it is absolutely vital to have a guide as life in the military is difficult and there are lots of issues that require the guidance and experience of someone with experience in dealing with those complex issues. I think that the mentoring happens naturally based on respect and that this program formalizes a process that really doesn't need that kind of structure. I've seen time and time again MCMP logs being treated as more of a burden than a benefit, and would like to see the requirement of the program relaxed. Our Marines should also, be allowed to choose their own mentors.
Mentees should have the opportunity to select a formal mentor. The chain of command may have to approve since some Marines may just pick someone who is a friend or someone who is not the best fit. Of course, this lends to other issues as well.

3.   What topics (if any) do you avoid discussing with your unassigned mentor? Please describe the topic as specifically as possible and explain why (i.e. I do not discuss topics such as_____with my assigned mentor because_____.)

I discuss any and all topics with an unassigned mentor because they are already on a personal level of mine and as a friend already comfortable with them.
I don't avoid any topics
My unassigned mentor and I are much more open about our personal lives because we have formed a truer friendship.
Nothing
I discuss everything with my unassigned mentors.
Certain career choices, how to deal with circumstances which are out of my control at work, as well as giving feedback to their topics - it goes both ways, up and down. I go to him for advice - he is a senior officer, and he comes to me for advice about how the Marine Corps really works, since I am a seasoned Staff Non-Commissioned Officer (SNCO) with much more experience than him.
None, We can talk about everything.
None
N/A My unassigned mentor helps me with any and all problems I may have professionally or personally.
none
We talk about any and all subjects.
Topics or issues internal to my section because the issues are either better suited to those directly involved or the unassigned mentor will have no influence on the outcome of the topic or issue.
personal because it is personal
I do not discuss topics such as religion with my unassigned mentor because of my own reserved

beliefs.
i speak with my unassigned mentor about everything. Marriage, credit, career and family. Issues.
I DONT AVOID ANY TOPICS.
I do not discuss topics such as personal problem with my assigned mentor because I been here for a month and do not know everybody yet.
I can talk about anything with my unassigned mentor
I have no problem talking to my unassigned mentor I prefer to talk to him
Personal problems mainly to unassigned mentor.
I discuss any topic with my mentor.
Nothing really, as I am not being judged in any way shape or form. He is not involved in my specific mission and is therefore clearheaded in the matter.
I don't avoid any topics with my mentor.
None, I have absolute trust and confidence in my unassigned mentor.
getting out of the marines, because I don't want to be treated different
Personal problems because I am an independent person
I talk with my unassigned mentor about work and the frustrations of our job. We discuss little things that me be bothering us with the way the shop is operating.
I don't avoid any topics with my unassigned mentor.
I do not discuss topics such as personal problems with my unassigned mentor because they're my issues and i don't feel it's fair to dump them on others, I do ask for advice from time to time but don't give many details.
We talk about everything
they will tell others
I do not have a MCMP mentor but with the "unassigned" mentor I would talk about situations usually dealing with people senior to me and career mostly.
I discuss any topic with my unassigned mentor because I feel comfortable enough to confide in him/her
Any and every topic is discussed.
None
I discuss topics equally. Only when I feel the need to introduce a third party do I.
Career goals and moves.
Everything from personal issues concerning from home, family, and my personal wellbeing. to where I see myself in a year and a half from now, what avenues I plan to go down as far as further my career in all aspects from B billets to advancing in my own MOS.
don't have an un-assigned mentor
Family and elder who can give real life advice vs. a senior enlisted who is younger than me.
None - the unassigned mentor has no bias and is very objective in advising
Usually, the unassigned mentor is also a close friend or co-worker, so a lot of things are shared amongst each other, esp. if you have been together for a while (8 months or greater).

> There are no limitations here; I go to my unassigned mentors to figure out what the best way to deal with my challenges regardless of the situation.

4.   What other thoughts (if any) about the MCMP or mentoring and receiving mentoring in the Marine Corps would you like to share?

Say what needs to be said not just what's on the template
More focus is needed on this program. Currently there is no emphasis or allotted time.
Mentorship occurs at many levels and should not require an "assigned" mentor for our Marines to be mentored. During my observation of the MCMP I have noticed that many Marines are not satisfied with their "assigned" mentor. I believe that Marines feel obligated to their assigned mentor even though there may be a lack of respect or "looking up to" as a mentor should have. My personal opinion is that this program is a waste of time and paper. Mentorship is a constant process that is provided from many angles.
I think accountability is something that could be improved upon. I put more thought and effort into MOS development now that it is easier for people to look over my shoulder. It is not that i don't want others to succeed, it's just the amount of work sometimes can inhibit a good sit down from happening every month, and you may only get to do a sit down every three or so.
Good idea, great potential, horrible implementation. The MCMP is a Commanding Generals Inspection item, and that is the only time anyone truly cares about it - at inspection time. If we need binders and 4 different print-out sheets to document the mentoring that we do on a continued basis, then there is a need to change something. I don't know what my recommendation would be, but it would be something in the ballpark of implementing designated times, less required paperwork, and possibly the ability to assign mentors outside of the shop that you work in. In a work center of 9 Marines, there isn't enough diversity or experience when 8 of the 9 are ages 19 and under, and all of them are still serving in their first year in the Marines Corps. The ability to mentor Marines from throughout the squadron would be beneficial.
Assigned mentors who do not fully understand what their mentees roles and responsibilities are cannot be arbitrarily be assigned as mentors. This ineffective type of mentoring is rampant in the SNCO and above ranks. This is why MCMP is recommended for E1-E5 and O-1 to O-3 (not O-1E to O-3E).
The mentor/mentee should be somewhat compatible (not completely hate each other), instead of just being randomly assigned regardless.
For the "Good" Marines, the program is unnecessary as they are already striving to do better and seek the information to do so. For the "Struggling" or "Bad" Marines, it is a duplicate effort and paperwork because they have already drawn interest from their Leaders or are administratively controlled through a variety of processes.

Marines confide in those they trust and are the most comfortable with. Assigned personnel turn a positive critical atmosphere into a more discomforting paperwork based environment.
No program. Let Marines lead Marines!
Mentorship should occur naturally as part of normal professional conduct and leader/subordinate relationships.
I appreciate the time and work this program has out forward but not all mentors are adequately prepared.
It is good where it is but I think more unassigned mentoring is better least paperwork makes them want to open up more and you can help them out easier
This is a great program to help Marine to know each other, I cannot wait to have a mentee and be a mentor for other Marines
It seems to me that assigned mentoring diminishes the authenticity of having a mentor. A mentor should not be assigned to a mentor. A mentor and mentee bond is a relationship that should be built over a period of time.
The MCMP is good in its intentions, but there is simply not enough time in the day with the other competing requirements to fully execute it in its official capacity as it is currently designed. This is a good program with good intentions, but if anyone is following it to the letter then I would speculate that it is being "pencil-whipped." Regardless of the MCMP, my hope is that mentoring is still occurring.
As stated before, unscheduled "off the cuff" meetings are more effective. Mentoring under the structure of the MCMP gives mentorship a "forced" feeling and is less effective.
I think that we as Marines should be able to choose our mentor. I am more likely to get more out of a mentoring session if I can talk to someone I can trust and someone who genuinely cares about me and my success. I have a hard time talking to someone I work for because I don't feel like I can trust a lot of Marines. Also, when your mentor is someone you like and get along with its easier to talk to that person.
I believe the mentoring program has become a tool to document every little thing a Marine does to ensure if they screw up then the command can't hurt anyone else's careers. This is Marine Corps wide. Phrases like "intrusive leadership" and "failure of leadership" are all too commonly expressed in the mentorship program. Leadership and Mentoring are two completely separate things. You can't tell someone to mentor someone and the when that Marine screws up tell them it's a failure of leadership.
It should be maintained and should receive more focus than it currently does. It's the business of making leaders, and the Marine Corps in ineffective without competent, confident small-unit leaders.
I enjoy the mentor program as a whole but believe that everything does not need to be documented. If my parents got a divorce and I talk to my mentor about it there is no reason it should be placed in the mentorship folder. Counseling should definitely be documented, but other small or personal things don't need to be placed in the folder which just scares and stops marines from trying to form a relationship with their mentor.

none
Mentorship should be more personal based and fewer career based that why we have to counseling program.
I don't find the mentorship very useful, however I think it is a great starting point and needs to be tailored to your environment which I believe is the intent.
This program really needs to be looked at again and separated completely from the counseling side of it. This program could be amazing as an informal program like it was before. It becomes extremely muddled and confusing when it becomes a paper trail.
I have no further thoughts of this program
Personally I don't feel the MCMP helps me at all
It is a redundant system when doing each one correctly, they should be combined renamed and simplified.
If the mentors work extra, then it would rally help. But it depends on the person.
The idea of the program is great on paper, but having it shoved down our throats the way most commands execute it, takes away from the personal level of trust one can gain of his mentor or mentee. Documenting everything the programs requires you to, is a waste of time that would be better spent doing our jobs.
You can't force a person to mentor someone we do it as Marines every day. I just think this is another way to Micro Manage The Marine Corps
Making MCMP mandatory will not change anything about the leaders we have. There are good leaders and bad leaders, those that decide to keep the information they have attained to themselves will not disclose this even if they are made to meet with their mentees every month. They will only look after themselves and their own goals and utilize the MCMP as a way to track a Marine's shortcomings. Furthermore, though the MCMP was designed to be utilized to be NON-Punitive, how is it that commands now use the "paper trail" of mentorship jackets in Non-Judicial Punishment proceedings? If the Marine Corps were to keep this program it needs to be emphasized to be utilized not only for tracking the bad but also the good. I.e. Mandatory entries for LOA's, CerComm's, outstanding room inspections, etc., etc. etc. This program while innocent in ideation has been corrupted to be utilized for "dropping the hammer" on Marines.
The MCMP consumes valuable time, therefore is not used the way it was intended to. It is often 'forgot' about or deemed not that important considering the amount of time it takes to do the proper paperwork vs. unofficial mentoring that occurs on a daily basis.
I think mentoring should be a part of being a leader and doesn't need to be forced throughout the Marine Corps. Through your daily interactions with your Marines, you should build that trust and confidence with them that they can approach and talk to you about any situation that comes up. I think it is something extra for us to do that no one really takes seriously until it's time to get inspected on it.
Too much paperwork

Mentoring needs to be separate from Counseling
The mentoring program makes me feel pressured. It makes me feel judged. As such, it affects such areas as work and personal life. It has its benefits, but not as much to me personally.
I believe the "steel sharpens steel" book should be there strictly as a guide, but not gospel. It should cease being an inspectable item where Marines are held accountable if they do not follow it to the letter of the law.
We need to call the program something else, mentoring it is not.
i believe in the concept of the MCMP but it lacks enforcement from both some senior leadership and junior mentors actually taking the time to take care of their assigned mentees.
I feel marines should be required to choose a mentor that they feel can help them regardless of shop or rank.
i feel unassigned is more effective then assigned
Mentoring is something you should be doing every day, you shouldn't need a program which tells you how to mentor, and who you're going to mentor. You don't choose your mentee, the mentee chooses the mentor. If the mentor possess and displays qualities the mentee is looking for then all is well. But, when it comes to turd mentors who don't care, the mentee suffers.
Remove some of the nonsense charts like the ones that are supposed to be used for counseling.
Please standardize the Mentee folders. Cut out some of the redundant forms such and mentee log book, mentorship checklist. And develop a standard mentor/mentee session sheet that can be used to effectively record the session.
The counseling program I came up through the military was just as effective I believe everyone is a mentor in some shape or form and never had a problem addressing any issues or looking for guidance with my Seniors.
One should be able to pick the mentor, not be forced to have one.
Get rid of the lengthy paperwork process.
I have personally witnessed this program save the lives of 2 Marines, save the marriages of several, and prevent countless acts that would have easily been prevented. The system works but it takes a leader to buy in to the program and then enforce it ruthlessly. It is too easy to blow off and subsequently people think of it as a silly program. The hardest part of any policy is implementation. Marines are likely to resist at first but for those that fall in on the system, it can do wonders. Highest endorsement possible and one of the best systems in place within our Corps. Overall, the program creates lifetime relationships and helps people learn to communicate; both of which are highly important in our business.
MCMP can be an efficient and effective program if properly implemented. I have written a point paper in a previous command but the utilization of the MCMP and it was thrown away because the Commanding Officer was not interested in spending the time to properly execute the MCMP.
The top-level Leadership has to support the program!!!

It is too rigid. Senior leaders push it down the throats of subordinates, yet fail most often to conduct mentoring sessions themselves. This program is formally most beneficial for our young Marines who may be out on their own for the first time. As we become more seasoned, we should be encouraged to seek out formal mentors. If having a mentor is a requirement, we should be allowed to pick our own mentor vice having one assigned, to whom we may not feel has the personal or professional skills that we desire.

Yes, all Marines need a mentor. The problem typically arises due to time constraints and the program not being enforced and followed through. The senior officers are the worse at it especially to the officers under their control. Your boss should not be your personal mentor. A lot of things could go wrong. Professional and personal issues need to stay separated unless your mentor is open minded and will not hold personal issues against you. But, it is human nature to judge people differently because of personal mistakes they might have made.

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